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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH, 2012

Super Sam is a special guest at local company's grand opening

A DEAD leg may have kept Wales' international rugby captain from lining up last week-end against Scotland, but the tear-away flanker has been passed fit to appear in Langan this evening.

Sam Warburton, hailed in Wales as the world's best openside, will be performing the official opening at Home Comforts Furniture Warehouse at 6pm today (Thursday, February 16).

The business is owned by husband and wife team Gareth and Nicky Punter, who told The GEM that they believe they have spotted a gap in the market for quality furniture in top-notch materials – with a personal service.

Sam is noted for his strength, so perhaps he could help carry out a few items of furniture. Just make sure he returns them safely to the ground again!

(*See Wales rugby match comment on back page*)

High Street potholes are on the way out

ThE GEM often has cause to carry letters and articles that are critical of the Vale Council, so it is nice to report when things go to plan.

As was promised in this newspaper recently by Vale Council cabinet member, Coun Geoff Cox, work started on Monday night on re-surfacing the affected section of the High Street. It may well be finished by the time people read this!

Picture by MIKE WILCOCK.

Hidden heroes!

LEFT: Last week's Cowbridge Comprehensive musical, Sweeney Todd, is reviewed on page 4 of today's GEM.

However, hidden away in a dark corner of the set were the school's excellent orchestra. So, The GEM thought it was time for them to come out and take a bow.

Aberthin landlord has used his own life story to inspire spy thrillers

PHILIP IRWIN meets an author whose books cast light on a shadowy world.

A LOCAL landlord is hoping to develop a new career as a writer of spy stories – drawing his inspiration from his time in a special operations unit in the former Yugoslavia.

Jason Radek is currently looking after the Hare and Hounds pub in Aberthin, although he is also the landlord at the Prince of Wales in Coychurch.

However, his new career is a long way from the duties of mine host in a country pub, as he is hoping to carve a niche in the lucrative genre of spy fiction.

He has already written one book, *The Dark Secret of Fox: The Hunter*, and a second, entitled *The Cloak and Dagger Game*, is in the pipeline.

Jason writes under a nom de plume, as J D Fox, and a spy named Fox is the central character in the books.

He describes the stories as in the time-honoured tradition of the struggle between good and evil.

He added: "I write to help myself forget, and to get it off my chest."

Jason told The GEM: "I have drawn on my own experiences to write about Fox. I left Yugoslavia many years ago, in 1992, but for 26 years I was in the special forces there."

Jason says that he left Yugoslavia when it became obvious that the Balkan conflict was going to start.

ABOVE:
Spy thriller author Jason Radek, pictured at the Hare and Hounds in Aberthin.

This led – after terrible loss of life – to the formation of Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Slovenia, and he had no stomach for that

He said: "I loved Yugoslavia. It was not a hard-line communist state like East Germany. People could apply for passports and travel.

"I had friends from all the areas that would become separate countries and I wanted no part of a civil war."

He blames various religious leaders for fanning the flames. He said: "None of these religions talks about killing. The real villains are the clerics who twist religion."

Jason's work with the special forces involved a great deal of undercover work to counter terrorists and drug smugglers – often one and the same thing.

Going undercover and adopting a fake persona led to great strains in his personal life, and his time in the forces led to two failed marriages.

When he left Yugoslavia, he settled first in England, where he never felt comfortable, but things changed when he had the chance to take a pub in Wales, at Abertillery.

He and his partner Mary went there to give it a try – and they still live there now.

He said: "I found the Welsh people so friendly. When we went out for an evening, people would ask questions and soon I knew a lot about them and they knew a lot about me."

One thing that they probably don't know too much about is his time in special forces. Jason says that is gradually finding its way into his books – as his own form of therapy.

He is now settled in the Prince of Wales in Coychurch, but is also looking after the Hare and Hounds.

He said; "The locals have nicknamed me 'Vlad' after Vlad the Impaler, and we enjoy living in Wales."

The latest Fox book has been accepted by a publisher on the basis of the first four chapters, and Jason is busy working on it now.

He gets home at 1am in the morning and finds it difficult to sleep, so he writes for two or three hours in the night.

He is encouraged by the fact that one reviewer said his first book was "like James Bond but grittier and more believable".

Everyone knows what happened in Yugoslavia when the conflict broke out. The period that Jason, writing as J D Fox, has chosen, 1966 – 1992, is very different.

It is unlikely if anyone in the UK knows much about life in Yugoslavia then.

It means that Jason Radek has a chance to inform and entertain at the same time.

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Mrs Lucy Welch BSc (Hons) (City and Regional Planning)
01446 776375
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Royal gardener's close links with the Vale recalled

AS THIS is the year we are celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, I thought it would be nice to remember the head gardener of Buckingham Palace, Mr Nutbeam.

Prior to his appointment, he was head gardener at St Donats Castle before it became Atlantic International College.

He and his wife came back on a visit to Llantwit Major in the early sixties, which is when I met him one morning out shopping.

Our family knew him from his early days when my father, Sydney Howard, was maintaining the electricity at the castle.

While in Llantwit, he showed me some photographs of Buckingham gardens, which at that time were in black and white.

He told me that when his daughter was getting married, Her Majesty kindly gave her a cheque for £10,000, which was worth quite a lot then.

Later we saw him on television with the Queen, walking around the Palace gardens, on his retirement.

It was printed on the cover of the Radio Times, in colour.

Faith Francis,
Llantwit Major

Enthralling talk on Llantwit history

I WOULD like to use this opportunity to congratulate the Llantwit Major Local History Society for staging another interesting and well-attended talk last week.

I was delighted to be able to join over 60 other local residents to hear Mrs Christine Young talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about 'Llantwit Major and District from the air.'

Mrs Young shared with us how the town has evolved since the 1920s and how well-known names and families from the area played a pivotal role in the development of the town.

The society seeks to preserve and promote the great heritage of the settlement at Llanilltyd Fawr and the surrounding area.

The society's annual lecture programme runs from September to April, and I'd thoroughly recommend attending one of the series.

The society's archive room at the Old School is open every Friday (not public holidays) from 2pm and is well worth a visit if you'd like to find out more about the town's history past or present.

Congratulations once again to the committee and members of the society who all help bring to life Llantwit's great history.

Alun Cairns,
MP for the Vale.

Why stop the traffic?

WHY has a plan to stop traffic turning right on to Buttrills Road ever been thought of?

It is just a further nail in the coffin of Holton Road, which has already had most of the parking removed and pavements widened when it was not needed.

If you live east of Buttrills Road, is it really necessary to have to use one of the busiest roundabouts in Barry – just to have to come back on yourself?

So why has this even been thought of? Could the Vale of Glamorgan Council please explain?

Shane Overton,
Barry.

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We will (in certain circumstances) protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL.

Plaid leadership candidate warns:

'Local newspapers are vital to communities!'

I WANTED to express my concern at proposals by the Welsh Government to remove the requirement for local authorities and Ministers to advertise road traffic orders in local newspapers.

Newspapers are a vital part of our communities. They perform an important public service by holding public bodies to account for their policies and the way they spend money, and the loss of advertising revenue at this time could well put titles and jobs at significant risk.

I, and many other politicians, are concerned at the weak state of the media industry in Wales, compared to Scotland. Scant coverage is given to Welsh affairs in the UK media and this proposal will weaken the newspaper industry in Wales further, perhaps fatally.

Communities in Wales cannot afford to lose their local newspapers, which provide a wealth of information, and I urge the Welsh Government to rethink this proposition.

People have until February 29, 2012, to submit objections. Information can be obtained on ***http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/transport/traffi-corders/***

Leanne Wood AM,
(Plaid Cymru leadership candidate)

'Barry needs more vision'

AFTER reading a GEM article regarding the development of Barry Island Pleasure Park, I have some concerns and questions.

While I applaud the improvements of facilities for residents and visitors alike, such as a cinema at Barry Island Pleasure Park, one wonders if we will end up with just a load of quick money-making schemes of retail units and flats.

Will we, the people of Barry, be sold down the river on a possible promise of a cinema, which already seems to have been reduced in size?

Doesn't 124 flats and retail units suggest an awful lot of traffic on a road notorious for traffic jams, especially in the summer months?

I do hope that this development will have a little more vision for Barry residents and visitors to enjoy, and not just be another estate.

Was not planning permission for three bungalow at the old Barry Island Resort previously turned down when it was open and yet when closed down, somehow ended up with houses built all over it?

Could not more have been done at the Waterfront? It has many houses and retail facilities but very little by way of amenities for residents and visitors to enjoy.

It would be wonderful if it could be developed in such a way that the people of Barry could be proud of.

(Name and address supplied)

'Clamp down on these metal thieves'

I AM deeply disappointed that the Westminster Government has decided to block the Graham Jones (Labour) Private Member's Bill to tackle metal theft throughout the UK.

This decision proves that this Tory/Lib Dem Government refuses to take the urgent action required to deal with this devastating crime.

Our communities are facing relentless attacks by metal thieves and those unscrupulous metal dealers who are turning a blind eye to this growing crime.

At a time when our schools and hospitals are struggling for money to keep their services open, they are facing bills worth hundreds of thousands of pounds due to damage caused by metal thieves.

Even the lead flashing from the roofs of local pensioner bungalows was targeted by these heartless criminals. Then Llandough Hospital was targeted which led to the cancellations of 81 operations including eight for cancer patients.

But perhaps most shockingly was when the metal direction signs were stolen from Barry Cemetery costing the council thousands of pounds to replace.

Unbelievably, only 18 people last year were prosecuted under the 1964 Scrap Metal Dealers Act, with the average fine just £379. Now that's not what I would call a deterrent!

Rob Curtis, Barry
(Labour councillor)

Vale Forum voice for the young

ON January 23, young people from all over the Vale joined together in Penarth to give their views on the new Local Participation Strategy (not as boring as you may think!) from the Welsh Government.

The Welsh Government want to have a rule that the Vale Council (plus the 21 other local authorities) have a Youth Forum and will make them talk to young people when they are planning local services that will affect young people.

The VYF meet monthly in the Civic Offices on Holton Road in Barry. We also run projects, consultation events and training to help young people be active citizens and take part in local democracy.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Vale Youth Forum, just give me a ring or email me. Hope to hear from you soon.

Helena Jones, coordinator (telephone 02920 701254 or 07526449720) or email me on *valeyouthforum@hotmail.co.uk*

Helena Jones,
Penarth

Trinity Street traffic fiasco disappointment

I TOO, was disappointed, but not surprised, by the announcement that there was to be no improvements to Trinity Street traffic problems in Barry.

I endorse what Gaynor Maddox said in The GEM (26/02/12). If we get another opportunity to vote on the issue, we work *together* and not individually.

To explain my point: Our local councillor, another resident and I spent hours knocking on doors, asking the residents to vote for option 1, democratically voted for on June 19, 2010 over options 2 and 3 (my option was 2).

So, instead of the residents agreeing for this trial; it was an experiment for 18 months and if not successful it was to be reviewed. Instead, individuals offered their opinion on how to solve the traffic problems – the democratic vote for option 1 was scuppered.

If the Vale wanted an opportunity to abandon this scheme, the residents handed them one.

It will be interesting to read the reply to Mrs Linda Callows' request for an explanation on this issue (The GEM, February 2).

Historical facts: 90 houses in Trinity Street; 47 responses received; 23 for option 1; eight for option 2; and eight for option 3. Also, option 1 was the least expensive.

My grateful thanks to The GEM for giving space to this problem.

Brian Allen
(*Trinity street resident for 55 years*)

Huge benefits of Reindeer parade

WE read with concern your article in the January 19 edition of The GEM.

In our view. the annual Reindeer parade is a wonderful event, which provides enjoyment for thousands of people of all ages – as well as promoting and raising the profile of the town and raising money for local charities.

The benefits cannot just be measured on the day. It is difficult to imagine that many people who enjoy the day are not encouraged to return throughout the year, thereby helping to maintain and enhance the vibrancy of the town.

It would be a great pity if the Cowbridge community, as a whole, are not able to sustain the event.

On the day, Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions Club provide stewarding, with assistance of Cowbridge Rotary, and do a bucket collection for local charities.

We also organise and run the free Santa's Grotto, which is a popular attraction with younger children, as well as their parents and grandparents.

Last year, we raised £1,600, which is being used to benefit local good causes, especially for children and young people.

For example, the local Barnardo's group and Christmas gift appeal for disadvantaged children.

We really hope that the annual Reindeer parade can be maintained for the benefit of the whole Vale community.

John Andrew,
(*Secretary, Llanwit Major and Cowbridge Lions Club)*

Losers were the winners?

MR Christopher Short (GEM letters, last week) questions who really won the Second World War? If he equates the death and destruction on mainland Europe inflicted by the Americans, British and Russians as winning, that is a view he is entitled to.

However, spend more than a little time in both Germany and Japan today – then make a direct comparison of all aspects of life there and in Great Britain – and it is obvious who won in the long term!

Brian Williams,
Barry

Coping with computer scam

HAVING just read an article in The GEM about a PC scam, I received three phone calls from such types last week.

I knew from the start of the conversation that it was a scam– an Indian voice, poor English-speaking, claiming to have had reports from my computer about it being infected.

Luckily, I live with a computer IT specialist.

I let them talk for about two minutes (wasting their phone bill, not mine) then I hit them with my knowledge. They hung up in less than two seconds.

If anyone gets a call claiming their computer has sent back information stating that there is a problem, tell the person on the other end of the phone that you are an IT specialist, you know that your computer is not infected, and you know they are trying to scam you.

It has worked for me every time.

Colin Templeton-Northcote

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL FEBRUARY 23)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
16 Thur	00.17	8.0	12.59	7.9
17 Fri	01.49	7.9	14.29	7.8
18 Sat	03.19	8.0	15.57	8.0
19 Sun	04.25	8.6	16.58	8.6
20 Mon	05.17	9.2	17.42	9.1
21 Tues	06.03	9.6	18.26	9.5
22 Wed	06.41	9.9	19.01	9.7
23 Thur	07.17	9.9	19.33	9.6

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should always check with a tide table specific to their location.

E-Mail Contacts: ***gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk • gemsales@tindlenews.co.uk*** **• Tel 01446 774484**
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Mum and daughter in miracle escape as car flips over, *twice*!

REPORT by TIM CHAPMAN

'THERE but for the grace of God…' Vicki Swift's voice trails away in astonishment that she and her daughter Gabby, who attends Cowbridge Comprehensive School, survived an incident at the Pentre Cwrt roundabout in Llantwit Major on Saturday morning in which her car flipped over two and a half times.

Vicki (38) who is now recovering at her home in St Athan, was airlifted to the University Hospital of Wales with head injuries.

She told The GEM: "Somebody up there was definitely looking after me!"

The drama unfolded at just before 10am on February 11.

"It was at about 9.45am and I was taking my daughter Gabby to her friend's house.

"We hit some black ice and I tried to correct the car."

The Ford Focus struck a previously damaged pole on a mini-island and flipped over.

"We turned two and a half times, and the car ended up on its side."

ABOVE:
The air amubulance leaves Llantwit Major with Vicki.
(PHOTOGRAPH by SYLVIA GEARY)

ABOVE:
Vicki and Gabby relaxing at home on Monday night and reflecting on how fortunate they were to survive the incident.

A number of people who happened to be at the scene responded magnificently, and Vicki and Gabby, who sustained a cut to her hand, are keen to thank them.

Vicki, a legal secretary who works in Cardiff, said: "A woman called Mandy contacted the emergency services, and two passing cyclists kicked the windscreen in and got us out.

"I can remember hearing the 'click-clacking' of their shoes as they approached the car.

"Another man in a van stopped. He was a first responder and dressed my wounds. I'd scalped myself!

"It was as if someone had taken a tin-opener to my head."

Gabby, aged 13, a pupil at Cowbridge Comprehensive School, said: "The air ambulance arrived very quickly for mum – within about 20 minutes."

The helicopter landed on the road nearby and then airlifted Vicki into Cardiff.

She said: "I want to thank the man in the air ambulance for all his help, too. I can still recall him smiling at me."

Vicki needed 30 stitches and 30 clips to deep cuts in her head. She also has two black eyes, but thinks she got off lightly.

"The fact that my daughter is all right, means that I'm all right. The fact that we were able to walk away from the car is a blessing.

"At the moment, I'm feeling quite strong, but in a couple of days, I'll probably have a sob."

Following treatment, checks and an overnight stay at the University Hospital, Vicki was allowed to return to her home in Eagle Road, St Athan, the next day.

The family are understandably having a couple of quiet days to recover.

Vicki's mum Norah said: "I want to thank everybody for saving my family. The police said it is a miracle they're alive.

"We also think we ought to let the first responder know that we've got his blanket!"

Latest bridge club results

THE Vale of Glamorgan Bridge Club night on February 6 involved 23 pairs.

The results were: First, Debbie and Simon Richards, 70.84 per cent; second, May Moore and Tony Disley, 65.27; third, Mike Best and Kevin Maddox, 65.14; fourth, Luba Ashworth and Adrian Thomas, 61.04; fifth, Pat and Brian Swain, 59.77; sixth, Marion and David Stephenson, 57.44.

A WBU simultaneous pairs event will take place on Monday, February 27 at 7pm prompt.

Cowbridge and District Bridge Club's night at Llanblethian on February 7 involved 18 pairs:

First, Hugh Williams and Gordon Berrey 69.84 per cent; second, Luba Ashworth and Joan Bird, 66.27; third, Sheena Sargeant and Brian Swain, 60.32; fourth, Amy Owen and Glenda Roberts, 59.52; fifth, Brenda Grove and Pam Higgs, 56.75, sixth, Marian East and Rita Williams, 55.56.

The next Friday afternoon social bridge event will be held at Llanbleddian church hall on February 24 at 2pm. Please contact me on 01446 773596 for further details.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Your local correspondent is Nancy Davidge, "Tynewydd", Llangan. (01656) 860303

Council news

THIS month's council meeting held in the Llangan Community Hall saw residents from Fferm Goch and St Mary Hill expressing their concern at news that the travellers' site in 'Elasto Lane', Llangan, was to be extended.

They were assured that everything possible would be done to prevent this.

There followed an interesting talk by Mrs Jane Williams, of the 'Creative Rural Communities'.

She outlined the many activities people could enjoy – Pride in Our Villages, Pride in the Vale; Greenlinks community transport service (a professional, friendly and accessible transport facility for those who need it most).

For more information, telephone 0800 294 11134; Creative Rural Communities, Old Hall, Cowbridge.

The next community meeting will take place in the Treoes Community Hall on March 5 at 7pm.

Successful auction

LATEST UPDATE: the auction which took place on Saturday, January 29 in the Treoes Community Hall raised £3,200.

A big thank you to everyone for their support and to the hall committee for their organisational skills. THIS year, it is St Canna's church Llangan's turn to celebrate Ash Wednesday. on February 22 at 7.30pm.

The next family service is on Sunday, February 26 at 11.15am.

All families are welcome and are encouraged to join in the service, which takes on a different theme every month.

Refreshments follow in the vestry.

I hope the lights leading to the church and the vestry are fully functional before anyone visiting sustains an injury!

Service

A SERVICE will be held in Saron Chapel, Treoes on Sunday February 26 at 3pm, the last to be conducted by Rev Alwyn Evans, who is retiring.

All who have enjoyed his sermons over many years wish him every happiness and contentment in his retirement.

Celebration

A WELSH theme night for St David's Day will take place in the Treoes Village Hall on March 3 at 7.30pm with singer and comedian Keith Davis.

For tickets, call 01656 646148.

Saron meeting

ONLY hardy members venture out to Saron Chapel Club on a cold and windy night.

For the meeting held on February 8, a quiz had been arranged on 'music of the musicals'. ***This will probably take place at a later date.***

George puts his skills to the test!

ABOVE:
George Hawksworth with one of his trophies.

A YOUNG man from Cowbridge, who is making a name for himself in the sport of fencing, takes a significant step forward later this month.

Cowbridge Comprehensive student George Hawksworth, 18, will be travelling to Jersey to take part in the Junior Commonwealth Fencing Championships.

He will be representing Wales in the men's epee competition.

George, who started his fencing at the Vale club, now trains at Cardiff fencing club and is coached by Peter Stewart.

George has had a good season so far; again finishing in the top 20 of the GB Junior (under-20) rankings, which qualified him for Commonwealth selection.

He also represented Wales in the UK School Games in September, is currently holder of the O'Sullivan Cup (open one-hit epee), the Turner Cup (Welsh intermediate epee), and is the current Welsh under-18 epee champion.

The event in Jersey, however will be one of George's toughest fencing challenges, with strong international competition from overseas, as well as the other home countries.

VEG VERSE!

THE next meeting of Cowbridge Gardening Club will be held at 7.30pm on February 23 in the Lesser Hall, when the speaker will be Kate Williams, a poet gardener. "Come and be entertained by some 'Veg Verse'. New members and visitors welcome," a spokesperson urges.

Young farmers tread the rehearsal boards for panto

MAENDY Young Farmers have again been very busy in recent months, beginning with the Glamorgan county Christmas party at the Grove Golf Club, Porthcawl.

The evening was well attended by all ages and by all clubs; it was a thoroughly enjoyable event in which everyone enjoyed a post Christmas get-together.

More recently, Maendy were joined by fellow Young Farmers Clubs Llantrisant and Bridgend on a very successful trip to Playzone in Swansea on January 19. The indoor play centre provided a fun filled evening for everyone.

In preparation for the forthcoming annual Glamorgan YFC pantomime competition, Maendy have been rehearsing tirelessly, along with organising costumes and building scenery. The competition will stretch over three nights from February 17-19 at The Princess Royal Theatre, Port Talbot.

Come along to watch the seven Glamorgan clubs take to the stage to perform their production. Maendy will be performing last on the Sunday evening.

The performances start at 7pm each evening, and tickets can be bought from county organiser, Gwyneth Thomas (telephone 01656 864488 or email yfcwales_glamorgan@yfc-wales.org.uk) or on the door. For more information, please see our website www.maendy.btck.co.u

Prior to the competition, we will be holding a dress rehearsal parents' evening at Barry Memorial Hall on Thursday February 16; doors open at 7pm, curtain up 8pm.

Maendy invite you to be swept away on a magical carpet ride to enjoy the vibrant sights and sounds and savour the flavour of 'A Hot Pot of Ahji-Bhaji' (an original recipe freshly prepared by Richard Harris and Richard Western).

Glamorgan Hunt members will also be taking to the stage for what promises to be a memorable performance of Cinderella – "the play wot I wrote!".

We hope to see you there on our last performance before the big night!

Lydia Phillips

Big Screen Cowbridge

BIG Screen's next presentation is *Resistance* (Cert PG) on Thursday, February 23 at 7.30pm in the town hall.

Imagine Great Britain conquered by the Nazis in World War Two. Wales, as always, is on the western fringes of the new state.

In a remote valley, the menfolk are determined to fight for their freedom, escaping to the hills and leaving their wives and lovers behind.

Set in the war, but by no means a war film. From the novel by Owen Sheers and starring Michael Sheen and Andrea Riseborough.

Doors open 7.10pm. Tickets £3 (available in advance from the town clerk's office, or on the door).

Big Screen is the trading name of the Vale of Glamorgan Film Society, a not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers; Old Hall, High Street, Cowbridge, 01446 771929.

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YOUNG CAST CAPTURE THE TRAGEDY AND HIGH DRAMA OF SWEENEY TODD

REVIEW by PHILIP IRWIN
PHOTOGRAPHS by MIKE WILCOCK

WHEN it comes to musicals, Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* is right at the top when it comes to degree of difficulty.

It demands high quality choral singing, actors and singers who can tread the thin line between black comedy and drama, and it also has complicated set pieces that require split-second timing from the principals and the chorus.

It is so difficult that schools tend to shy away from it – choosing shows that are an easier ride and better known –so it is to the credit of Cowbridge Comprehensive School's performing arts department that they decided to take it on.

What's more, the young cast approached the task with such a level of commitment that they pulled it off – taking the audience through the story of Benjamin Barker (Sweeney Todd) – a man grievously wronged by a corrupt judicial system.

He starts off consumed by a desire for revenge – which is transformed into a hatred for people in general – and that leads to his tragic demise when he realises that he has destroyed the one thing that he cared about.

There are lots of things you have to get right when doing *Sweeney Todd*, but the two most important are *a/* getting the opening right, and *b/* having a good Sweeney and Mrs Lovett.

Looking at the opening number first, I saw the Wednesday night show. I would have preferred to catch the Friday or Saturday night, because by then the cast tend to have relaxed and cast off their early nerves but, even on Wednesday, it was clear that from the moment that the unsettling piano starts, followed by the line "Attend the tale of Sweeney Todd", that the cast were primed to pin the audience back in their seat with the power of their singing.

It really is the best opening of any show – ever!

And how about Sweeney and Mrs Lovett? Well, there were no worries on that score either.

Matthew Whiteley was good last year in *Oliver!* as Bill Sykes – an out and out villain. Sweeney Todd is much more complex, and he carried it off by sheer force of personality.

There were one or two songs where he was right on his limit ('My Friends' and 'Johanna') but he managed the difficult task of making the audience care about a man who eventually becomes a cold-blooded murderer.

In the early scenes, he conveyed a sense of nobility and tenderness, and when his big moment came, with the song 'Epiphany', he went spectacularly mad – advancing on the audience with razor in hand – demanding vengeance.

Cate McHugh was a terrific Mrs Lovett. She has a fine sweet voice but she brought out all the aspects of her character. One minute she has a girlish crush on Todd, the next she is a consummate businesswoman who is in her element running her pie shop, and then she becomes a cold-blooded killer.

She also gets most of the show's comedy numbers ('Worst Pies in London', 'A Little Priest' and 'By The Sea') and she is a good enough actress to get a laugh from every line.

Even with two more than capable leads, a production of *Sweeney Todd* needs strength in depth, and there were other fine performances.from Will John and Olivia Hopper as the romantic interest, Anthony and Johanna.

Johanna is not an easy role, and Olivia played it with great verve and revealed a fine voice, while Will handled the difficult songs that Anthony has to sing with aplomb.

Every show has its villains, and Oliver Hitchings (Judge Turpin) and Thomas Harmer (Beadle Bamford) were suitably sleazy and moved around the stage with a great sense of menace.

Young Gareth Otley did well as Tobias, the young boy who becomes Mrs Lovett's assistant, and Rhys Jenkins did a fine comic turn as Pirelli, the street barber who becomes Todd's first victim.

Last but not least by any means was Saskia Pay, who played the mad beggar woman who hides an awful secret. Saskia displayed an intensity over the whole show that made it pretty tiring to watch her. When people talk of actors staying in character, she was a prime example of what they mean.

The show, directed by Amanda Campbell, looked really good and the set was very effective, giving a good idea of what can be done in this new school theatre.

Hidden away in that set, tucked away in a dark corner, was the final key component in the show, the school orchestra, under the direction of Adrian Colborne. I can't praise them highly enough, because the score drives this show – moving from sentimental ballads to music that is full of foreboding – and on to passages that evoke murder and madness.

This was a show that stretched every single cast member, and they can all take great satisfaction from their performances. If you believe that education is about taking pupils out of their comfort zone, then *Sweeney Todd* was a prime example of this in action.

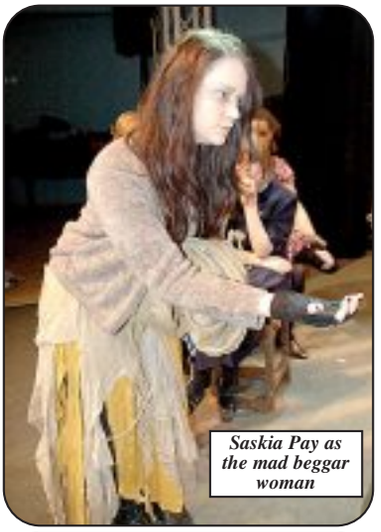
Stephen Sondheim is not to everyone's taste, I know, but this show has drama, humour, tragedy, social comment, great songs, great acting, and superb ensemble singing with a fine orchestra.

That's got to be better than yet another production of *Grease* or *We Will Rock You*!

ABOVE: Sweeney (Matthew Whiteley) and Mrs Lovett (Cate McHugh) decide to go into the pie business.

Matthew Whiteley.

Gareth Otley.



Saskia Pay as the mad beggar woman

In rehearsal, Olivia Hopper (Johanna) and Cate McHugh (minus wig) are flanked by two members of the chorus.

Left to right: Rhiannon Owen, Adrian Colbourne and Amanda Campbell.

Rhys Jenkins played Pirelli.

SWEENEY TODD CAST LIST

Sweeney Todd – Matthew Whiteley
Mrs Lovett – Cate McHugh
Anthony Hope – Will John
Johanna Barker – Olivia Hopper
Tobias Ragg – Gareth Otley
Judge Turpin – Oliver Hitchings
Beadle Bamford – Thomas Harmer
Beggar Woman – Saskia Pay
Adolofo Pirelli – Rhys Jenkins
Jonas Fogg – Isaac Richmond
Townspeople (ensemble):
Livvy Chester, Fran Blyth, Grace Edwards, Dexter Budd, Hugh Exley, Georgina Shaw, Esther Richmond, Maisie Beech, Holly Pitcock, Hannah Fletcher-Peters, Megan Jones, Asha Fletcher-Peters, Hannah Jones, Ellie Williams, Verity-Belle Atkinson, Ceri Richmond, Tegan Cecil, Bronte Cowley, Lukas Wallis, Rosie Lovatt.
The Orchestra:
Violin – Mrs Julie Williams, William Christian, Niamh Gallagher, Joshua Young
Cello – Hannah Clist
Flute/Piccolo – Sara Friel, Monserrat Bray
Oboe – Sophie Gallagher
Clarinet//Bass Clarinet – Joe Stephenson, Katie Wynne, Catrin Howells
Clarinet/Flute/Piccolo – Mrs Jenny Weir
French Horn – Cameron Hughes
Trumpet – Tom Page, Michael Hain
Piano/Organ – Mr Adrian Colbourne
Percussion – Jasper Watkins, Harley Wilkinson.
Production team:
Director – Mrs A Campbell
Musical director – Mr A Colbourne
Assistant musical director – Miss Rhiannon Owen
Stage management – Miss C Robins, Mr J Taylor
Costume – Miss R Owen and Miss C Pullen (assisted by her year-11 pupils, parents and friends)
Back stage – Mr J Taylor and Miss C Robins
Production assistants – Miss A Addison and Miss L Williams
Set design – Alex Winter
Props – Miss L Kenworthy-Neale
Lighting design: Lightsource – Llwyd Hernbiman, assisted by sixth form students.
Programme Design – John Hitchings
Thanks to Cowbridge Parent Teacher's Association for organising the refreshments.

Aberthin artist captures grandeur of Welsh landscape

ABERTHIN artist Gary Hamer Rees, who specialises in the landscapes of south and west Wales, is showcasing his paintings at 'The Gallery', Old Hall, Cowbridge, until March 2.

For many years, Gary was a professional illustrator before turning his talents to being a full time artist.

He explained: "I used to illustrate children's books and adventure stories, but now I paint Welsh landscapes.

"I particularly like capturing the Heritage Coast and locations in west Wales. I paint in both oil and water colours."

For Vale people visiting the exhibition, there are a number of familiar sights.

Gary was born in the Amman Valley, but has lived in Aberthin for 25 years.

For artists, commissioning an 'exhibition space' can be a daunting prospect as to how well their work is received and how much time and effort they have to expend.

Gary said: "I'm pleased to say that the exhibition has been a success with a lot of good comments and appreciation."

The paintings can be viewed from Monday to Saturday until 5pm each day.

ABOVE: Welsh artist Gary Hamer Rees is exhibiting his paintings at Old Hall for another two weeks until March 2.

£2,000 boost for charity runner

A CHARITY quiz held at Cowbridge Rugby Club attracted 23 teams and raised more than £2,000 for Ty Hafan children's hospice.

The event was organised by Llanblethian journalist Simon Farrington, aged 54, as part of his London marathon fund-raising appeal, and around 115 friends and colleagues took part in the quiz and supported a charity raffle.

Simon will be running his first marathon on April 22 and he hopes to push his fund-raising total past the £3,000 mark.

"I'm indebted to the support of co-organisers Nigel and Claire Matthews and for the support of everybody who attended the event.

"Without the generosity of local companies, I could not have staged such a big event. In particular I must thank Barclays Bank for match funding, and Fine Wines Direct, The WRU, Wales Millennium Centre, Chepstow racecourse, The Bush at St Hilary, Xantippe, Pebbles boutique, the Bay Tree, Olive & Oils, and Ten Feet Tall Bar for donating such fantastic raffle and quiz prizes.

"Also, I must thank John Griffiths and the committee at Cowbridge Rugby Club for allowing me the use of the club free of charge. Judging by the good time had by all, the bar takings were pretty good!"

Simon is running his first marathon and can be seen three or four times a week pounding the lanes around Llanblethian, Llandough and Aberthin as he builds up his mileage and fitness.

Anybody wishing to sponsor him and support Ty Hafan can give him a call on 01446 775678 or visit www.justgiving.com/Simon-Farrington

'A scarf is not just for warmth'

LLANHARRY WI NEWS

ROSEMARY Scadden was the speaker for our February meeting, and she demonstrated the uses of the long scarf.

Rosemary quite rightly said we all have masses of scarves in the drawer of varying size, shape, colour and material.

Scarves can be worn on the head, around the neck, shoulders and even the waist.

Members were given a tip not to travel without a scarf in their luggage as it has endless uses from a sunshade for the head, an emergency handkerchief and protection from the aeroplane's air conditioning.

Some famous people associated with a scarf are the Queen, Audrey Hepburn, Jackie Kennedy and Rupert Bear.

We were shown many different ways of tying and draping the scarf to compliment the garment and members had a go as well.

The competition was a scarf ring or brooch, which most members entered, and a diamante bow brooch caught Rosemary's eye, belonging to Rita Butt.

Social time followed, giving members a chance to chat over a hot drink and cakes provided by Ros Griffiths and Vi Hall.

The raffle was won by Katherine Maddock.

During the business meeting, the county newsletter was given out.

Glamorgan Federation is the host county for the National Eisteddfod to be held at Llandow in August and have requested members to donate a hand-made bag incorporating the theme 'coast/seaside'.

Pauline Charles offered to make bags for this event.

Six members were recently invited by Ystradowen WI along with Bontfaen and Llanblethian WIs, who are part of the Bordervale Link group, and were entertained by the Bella Donna Ladies Choir.

A talk on the Botanic Gardens is next month's subject and the competition is an item beginning with 'G'.

JR

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News from St Hilary

Jubilee celebrations

FOLLOWING a meeting on Monday, February 13 attended by around 30 villagers, plans are now under way for a celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on Monday, June 4. A co-ordination group has been established.

Road repairs

FOLLOWING discussions about the state of the roads in the village after the village hall AGM on Sunday, November 27 and sterling work by Heather Shaw, our representative on Llanfair Community Council, the Vale Council has committed to improve the roads in the village.

Within six weeks (from February 14) white lines will be reinstated followed by permanent repair of the potholes. Monitoring equipment will also be put in place to assess the speed of the traffic through the village.

St David's Day

THIS year's St David's Supper is being held on Saturday, March 3 in the Village Hall.

Coffee morning

A ST DAVID'S celebration coffee morning is being held on Tuesday, February 28 in the village hall.

Bush quiz

THE next quiz at the Bush is this Sunday (February 19) – the theme is 'Disney'.

The quiz on Sunday, March 4, will be in aid of NSPCC and will feature questions about our patron, Saint David.

Track

MANY of you might have noticed that scalpings have been laid on the track up to St Hilary Down making access easier and less muddy. Another layer will be put down when the initial load has bedded in.

Other activities

THESE include: Flower arranging classes on the last Friday of the month; also, options are being explored for wireless broadband to the village.

Terry and Monica Dennis

Email your local news to gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk or write to The GEM, at Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL

Members stand in a silent tribute to a former stalwart

LLANBLETHIAN WI

AT the February meeting, the president welcomed members and quickly dealt with the business and forthcoming events.

She announced that a former member, Mrs Joyce Charters, had recently died and members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

Former member, Mrs Jean Smith, was presented with a farewell gift prior to her imminent move with her husband to France. Jean thanked everyone and promised to visit us when next in Wales.

The speaker, Mr Clive Clubb, spoke about the varied and interesting history of 'Island Farm', Bridgend. His talk was delivered with much humour and was thoroughly enjoyed by the ladies.

He was thanked by Mrs Mary Brookman, and before leaving, he judged our 'wartime souvenir' competition, choosing that of Mrs Barbara James as the winner.

The raffle was won by Mrs Jean Jones.

The next meeting will be held in the church hall, Llanblethian, on Thursday, March 8 at 7.30pm, when Mrs Sally Mavey will speak on 'The Bayeux Tapestry'. Visitors and new members welcomed at our meetings.

VJC

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ABOVE:: Members of Father Maher's family with Father Edmond Neizer, Father John Meredith, and Arthur Thompson.

Plaques placed in memory of Father Pierce Maher

W A Brown, funeral directors, at Llantwit Major, have donated two plaques in memory of the much-loved parish priest, Father Pierce Maher.

A small service was held in Our Lady and St Illtyd Church on Friday evening, February 10, the first anniversary of his death.

The service was led by Father Edmond Neizer, the new Parish Priest of Llantwit Major and Cowbridge, assisted by Father Isaacs and Father Meredith, both close friends and colleagues to Father Maher.

In attendance were members of Father Maher's family who had travelled from their homes in Ireland. At the end of the service, the plaque was blessed by all three priests. The other plaque has been erected at St Cadoc's Church in Cowbridge.

Funeral director, Arthur Thompson, met the family and said the funeral home was honoured to donate the plaques and remember Father Maher, a well-loved and respected pillar of the church community.

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ABOVE: Dorothy and Edna cut the Boverton WI birthday cake.

Council gets pat on the back (from its auditors) in report

THE Vale Council has improved its performance in most key service areas, a report by the Auditor General for Wales has concluded.

In its Annual Improvement Report, the Wales Audit Office said the council has "strong corporate management arrangements" in place and is improving across a range of services.

The report also notes that:

• The council has good arrangements in place for managing its resources and driving change.

• The council can demonstrate improvement in most key service areas.

• The council is working effectively with partners to improve community safety and services for specific users.

• The council has made good progress in delivering improvements in social care.

• Results in schools are good but there is a decline in attendance in secondary schools.

• The council has good arrangements in place for setting its objectives and monitoring delivery of actions and is in the early stages of improving the way in which it evaluates the impact of what it is doing.

• The council is making good use of information and communications technology in the provision of services and delivering efficiencies.

• The council has been praised by the Welsh Language Board for improvements in its services; for achieving the majority of its targets contained within its Welsh Language Scheme.

The Auditor General, Huw Vaughan Thomas, said: "We found that effective financial management, good use of information technology and strengths in people management were ensuring the council was using most of its resources."

The Leader of the Vale Council, Coun Gordon Kemp, said: "The report recognises the huge amount of work being done, and which will continue to be carried out in the Vale Council.

"I am pleased that the continuing progress we are making is being recognised by the Wales Audit Office, because it reflects the valuable contribution from all areas of the council."

To see a copy of the report, visit www.wao.gov.uk/home.asp.

Branch celebrates 63rd birthday

NEWS FROM BOVERTON WI

AS it was Boverton WI's 63rd birthday celebrations, president Joan Davies kept routine business to a minimum and after welcoming three visitors, she introduced Linda Norman who, together with three of our members, gave a demonstration of Zumba dancing.

Linda explained that the music came from all around the world and the steps vary from gentle to very energetic.

During the demonstration, we had light refreshments of crudites, dips, cheeses etc, followed by bara brith and birthday cake, which was cut by Edna Clay and Dorothy Davy, who are the longest serving members.

Gradually, more members joined in the dancing, which became more energetic as the evening progressed!

Anne Williams gave the vote of thanks.

Mary Davies, Pam Lennox, Molly Lane, Wendy Hart and Pam Lewis won the raffle prizes, and Anne Williams won the competition for the prettiest scent bottle.

Joyce Bruten has designed a beautiful greetings card for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee WI competition, which we all saw and admired.

We wish her luck!

The next meeting is on March 8, when we will have a demonstration of how to decorate cup cakes with an Easter theme.

New members and visitors will be made very welcome.

AC

UK BILL OF RIGHTS WILL PROTECT CIVIL LIBERTIES

VALE MP's VIEWPOINT

BRITAIN has always valued human rights and has ensured it is reflected within our values and institutions. Indeed, the UK was a founding member of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) – yet it now seems to have become a real problem to us.

In some instances it prevents us from taking action to protect ourselves and our nation's culture.

This needs to change.

Many of the rights contained within the convention can be traced back to the Magna Carta and to other laws long established in the UK, and I believe that they remain incredibly relevant today as government works with international partners to protect human rights and strengthen democracy across the world.

Since 2000, the ECHR has been given effect in Britain through the Human Rights Act. On coming into office, the Coalition Government established a Commission to investigate whether the Human Rights Act might be replaced by the creation of a UK Bill of Rights.

This Bill could protect and extend British liberties, incorporate and build on all our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

It would ensure that these rights continue to be enshrined in British law. The Commission is consulting widely and aims to report no later than by the end of 2012.

The Government is now using its chairmanship of the Council of Europe (the body which oversees the Court) to champion the need for the reform of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).

Vale MP Alun Cairns
reports to GEM readers

The ECHR has a vital role to play, but as its caseload has increased in recent years, so we have seen lengthy delays, and questions raised over the quality of its judges.

There is also concern about whether it gives enough weight to decisions made by legitimate national courts.

This threatens its reputation as a beacon for the cause of human rights, ruthlessly focussed on defending human freedom and dignity. The court must refocus itself on its original purpose – upholding the Convention and preventing the serious abuse of human rights.

The European Court of Human Rights has recently blocked Abu Qatada's deportation on the grounds that Jordan might use evidence obtained by torture against him – even though the UK and Jordan had previously reached agreement that he would not be tortured if he was deported.

The cleric faces terror charges in Jordan and the UK Government says he is a threat to national security, but a British judge decided earlier this week that his six-year detention could no longer be sustained after the ECHR's ruling.

I think that this ECHR ruling has created a frustrating and difficult position for the UK, but trust that the UK Home Office and the Foreign Office will work closely with the Jordanian government to find an effective solution to this case in particular.

Later in the year, we return to the issue of voting rights for prisoners, a matter that deeply concerns me.

BINGO PRIZE!

REPRESENTATIVES of ValePlus, the Vale-based charity which provides learning and leisure opportunities for people with a learning disability, were recently invited to attend a presentation evening at Cadoxton Bingo Club.

Mrs Jean Kirke, on behalf of the club, handed over a cheque for £455 to ValePlus director Melanie Carter and Chris Power.

Chris thanked everyone present for their fundraising efforts and Melanie added that such a large donation would help provide funding for specially-adapted equipment for the members to use.

Anyone wishing to know more about the work done by ValePlus, can check the website at ***www.valeplus.org.uk*** *or contact Melanie Carter on 01446 746691.*

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RWE npower is currently developing proposals to install technology at Aberthaw Power Station that would limit emissions of the NO_x released as a result of the combustion process and further reduce the environmental impact of the station.
The next stage of the Emission Reduction Project will be to submit a planning application to Vale of Glamorgan Council to fit the technology, known as selective catalytic reduction (SCR), later this year. We will also be seeking a variation to our operating license from the Environment Agency to incorporate these improvements to the station.
In advance of the application submission, we are holding three drop-in sessions to provide you with an opportunity to find out more about our proposals and speak to RWE npower representatives about any questions you might have.
The sessions will take place on:
Thursday 1 March – 12:00 until 19:00
Rhoose Community Hall, Stewart Road, Rhoose, CF62 3EZ
Friday 2 March – 12:00 until 19:00
St Athan Community Hall, Glyndwr Avenue, St Athan, CF62 4PP
Saturday 3 March – 13:00 until 17:00
Llantwit Major, CF61 1TF
We hope to see you at one of these sessions and look forward to hearing your views and answering any questions you might have about our proposals. In the meantime, if you require further information please contact us at aberthaw@rwenpower.com.
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Sustainable new development a priority in Wales

WALES has led the way in promoting a sustainable development scheme '*One Wales: One Planet*', which aims to put this policy at the heart of government – influencing all our decisions – to ensure that we make the best possible use of our national resources.

Dating back to 2009, when it was adopted and published, the scheme is now a central organising principle in policy and budget -making in the Welsh Government.

This means that we need to manage our environment and resources effectively – Welsh land, sea, air and water – but also recognise the opportunities we have to embed this in the development of our economy and public services.

John Griffiths AM, the Environment and Sustainable Development Minister, recently reported to the Assembly on the outcome of an independent review of this scheme to see what we have achieved, and how we could improve our implementation of the scheme across government.

It came to the conclusion that positive progress has been made by the Welsh Government, but highlighted that there is more to do to build on the work undertaken.

The report also highlights the Climate Change Strategy and 'Arbed' as two examples of progress which are to be commended. I have just announced further investment in Arbed, which invests in energy efficiency measures in housing, extending across Wales in April, resulting in jobs in the construction sector and new apprenticeship opportunities.

The reviewers also cite the Child Poverty Strategy, 21st Century Schools programme and Food Strategy as being examples of underpinning policies with sustainable development principles.

We have also co-funded the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, recently publishing the results of this independent research project which analyses risks and opportunities impacting on our infrastructure investment as well as our health, biodiversity management and the delivery of services.

For Wales, this risk assessment identifies the impact of a changing climate with key threats including increased flooding on the coast and inland rivers, as well as lower river flows and water shortage in summer.

Last year, we published our National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management to raise awareness of the risks and reduce the consequences, which we know of so well in the Vale.

I have recently announced more funding for flood alleviation projects in Wales.

In a statement to the Assembly, John Griffiths said that climate change is the greatest environmental challenge we face. He said that preparing for a changing climate is vital if we are to ensure that Wales is an attractive place to live and do business during the 21st century and beyond.

That is our goal and objective as a Welsh Government – putting sustainable development at the heart of everything we do.

With more than 100 organisations signing up to our Sustainable Development Charter, we are on the right road to achieve that in partnership with the public, private and third sectors, but most importantly with the people of Wales.

ASSEMBLY NOTES

by Jane Hutt AM
(Minister for Finance and Leader of the House)

New date for Vale AM's surgery in Cowbridge

THE Assembly Member for the vale of Glamorgan, Jane Hutt, will not be holding a surgery on February 18 at Cowbridge Town Hall, as previously advertised.

The surgery has now been moved to February 25, from 10am to 12 noon. Ms Hutt's office apologises for any inconvenience.

There is no need to book appointments ahead, but further information can be obtained from Camilla Beaven on 02920 898469, or by emailing camilla.beaven@wales.gov.uk.

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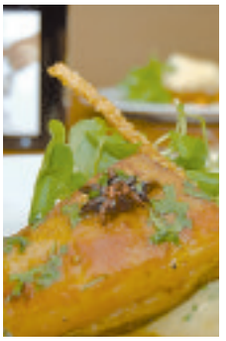
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£4,000 windfall for local community groups

ABOVE:
The local groups who lined up for the Waitrose windfall.

A TOTAL of £4,000 was donated to local good causes by Waitrose Barry, at a recent presentation evening.

They had taken part in the branch's 'Community Matters' initiative between September and December 2011.

Each month, three local causes are supported by the branch, with £1,000 being shared out between them.

The evening was hosted by Adrian Higham and Vicky Barree.

Cheques were presented for the following amounts: Penarth Gateway Club £400; 11th Barry Sea Scouts £340; Sully RFC £260; Ascent Climbing Club £210; Penarth Hard of Hearing Club £490; Act-4-Fun Children's Theatre £300; All Saints Primary School Community Garden £490; Caerau Dragon Bowmen £200; Ty Iolo £360; Ty'r Fro £300; Ty John Rowley £340.

The remaining £310 was donated as gift vouchers to various schools and groups for use with their Christmas fundraising.

If any local groups would like to be considered for Community Matters in the future, nomination forms are available from the 'Welcome Desk'; or contact the Waitrose branch for more information.

BARRIVALE BRIDGE CLUB NEWS

THE latest results from Barrivale Bridge Club are as follows

Tuesday, February 7, session one, mixed pairs championship.

In first place were Irene Thomas and Graham Jones with 60.32 per cent. Celia Thomas and Huw Thomas were second with 57.94, and in third were Carol James and Mike Close (57.64).

Celia and Huw won on handicap.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale. Telephone 01446 733425 or call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry, on Tuesdays at 7 pm.

Like us on Facebook: ***facebook.com/gemnew****, or follow us on Twitter:* ***@gem_news.***

Audit Report brings cheer to Vale

by Coun **GORDON KEMP**
Leader of the Vale Council

I WAS pleased to see that the Vale of Glamorgan Council has received positive results in the Annual Improvement Audit.

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) report highlights significant performance improvements across most key service areas within the council and confirms we have strong corporate management arrangements in place to secure continuing improvements across a range of services.

Highlights include:

• The council can demonstrate improvement in most key service areas.

• The council has good arrangements in place for managing its resources and driving change.

• The council is working effectively with partners to improve community safety and services for specific users.

• The council has made good progress in delivering improvements in social care.

• Results in schools are good, but there is a decline in attendance in secondary schools.

• The council has good arrangements in place for setting its objectives and monitoring delivery of actions and is in the early stages of improving the way in which it evaluates the impact of what it is doing.

• The council is making good use of information and communications technology in the provision of services and delivering efficiencies.

• The council has been praised by the Welsh Language Board for improvements in its services; for achieving the majority of the targets in its Welsh Language Scheme.

The WAO found council performance in delivering disabled facilities grants (DFGs) was poor, but also noted there had been improvements in recent years.

The council has prioritised this area of work and has already reduced delivery times significantly and, with new initiatives being introduced, will continue this improvement next year.

The delivery of DFGs for adults has improved over the last three quarters of 2011/12 to approximately 401 days.

Last year, the Welsh average was approximately 387 days. The council's current performance is within sight of this timescale. To see a copy of the report, visit www.wao.gov.uk/home.asp.

'Ash Path'

PLEASING news, too, for Dinas Powys residents who use the 'Ash Path' over the fields to Penarth. At Easter, we will be erecting a 1.2m high metal fence along the Ash Path route, which runs from Murch Road in Dinas to Sully Road.

This will protect users from livestock in the field through which the footpath passes. The Ash Path is an important link for local people, especially as it is regularly used by school children attending St Cyres Comprehensive School.

It will also continue to be an important link when the new Penarth Learning Community is opened, subject to planning permission, in October 2014.

Consultation

BARRY residents will be pleased to know we will soon be holding a public consultation on what to do with the empty land at Cemetery Road.

Possible options include recreational purposes such as a community park, a garden, a children's play area or allotments, but we are looking for public opinion on the most appropriate course of action.

The consultation process begins in April, and all interested parties will have their chance to email, write or phone us with their opinions and recommendations.

Grant blow

UNFORTUNATELY, it's not all good news for the Vale this month. We've recently received disappointing news of a 27 per cent reduction (£123,000) in the Local Transport Services Grant, which we fear may impact on local transport services in the Vale.

The Vale's cabinet member for planning and transportation, Coun Jeffrey James, has written to the Welsh Government expressing 'very serious concerns' that services may suffer or be lost as a result of the cutbacks.

This reduction is 5 per cent higher than the reductions being imposed in England and Coun James has expressed concerns that bus providers may be put off from tendering for routes.

However, we will be discussing with neighbouring authorities whether, through joint working, we can ensure the provision of the best possible service.

Fire on board coaster

BARRY Dock Lifeboat, along with Portishead Lifeboat and SARA lifeboats, were launched to aid a coaster which reported an engine room fire, but the crew put out the blaze themselves.

Spokesman Gerry Adams said: "The coaster was due to sail into Avonmouth and had lost all power. The Barry Dock lifeboat crew stood by the stricken coaster and was able to coordinate the other rescue craft until tugs were on scene to tow the coaster into the Avonmouth dock."

There were no reported injuries and all lifeboats returned to their ports.

The Changing Face of St Clare's

ST CLARE'S School in Porthcawl is planning big changes in preparation for their 75th anniversary next year.

Having secured a large investment from the School's owners, there are plans in progress to significantly improve the facilities available as well as the subject offering to pupils in all years.

The first phase of the development is due to start this Summer, as builders move in to construct a new Dining Hall and Home Economics teaching space, as well as relocating and improving the Nursery facilities.

Following these first steps, the rest of the work will follow in quick succession, including introducing a new Arts Centre, 6th Form block, extended library areas for both Senior and Junior pupils and more.

The School will also be introducing new transport routes to and from towns and villages in the Vale of Glamorgan, thereby easing access to the School for the many parents in these areas who are presently unable to reach it.

St Clare's will be holding an Open Afternoon on Friday 24th February, from 1.30pm onwards, for anyone who would like to have a look around the magnificent 7 acre site, speak to Head Teacher John Aguilar and meet the pupils.

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Senedd hosts launch of 2012 Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal

ON February 7, the Vale AM and Finance Minister, Jane Hutt, joined Marie Curie Cancer Care staff and nurses at the Senedd – to launch the charity's Great Daffodil Appeal.

The appeal is Marie Curie's biggest fundraising campaign and asks people all over the UK to wear a daffodil pin in support of Marie Curie Nurses, in return for a donation.

Marie Curie Cancer Care's director of policy and public affa, said: "Most of us, if we were dying, would want to be cared for at home, close to family and friends, as well as the things we love.

"Research shows that 67 per cent of people in Wales would choose to die in their own home if they were terminally ill – yet the majority of people in Wales still die in hospital; where they say they least want to be.

"Marie Curie Cancer Care is working to ensure more people are able to spend their final days in a place of their choice.

"By supporting our Great Daffodil Appeal, you are helping to raise vital funds which allow Marie Curie nurses to provide more free care to people with terminal cancer and other illnesses in their own homes or in one of the charity's hospices."

To find out how you can get involved in the Great Daffodil Appeal, please visit www.mariecurie.org.uk /daffodil or call 0845 601 3107.

ABOVE:
Vale AM Jane Hutt, Jan Stuart, a nurse based at Marie Curie s Penarth Hospice, and Gareth Williams, the chair of Marie Curie advisory board in Wales.

Marie Curie's care in the community

The Daffodil Appeal is an annual appeal and over the next few weeks, people in Wales will see volunteers out and about, asking people to wear a daffodil and make a donation.

One of Marie Curie's main aims it to provide people with the opportunity to die at home, if that is their wish.

Research shows that most people would like to do that, but more than 50 per cent of cancer deaths still occur in hospital. the place people say they would least like to be.

Since 2004 Marie Curie Cancer Care has been campaigning for more patients to be able to die in their place of choice and last year the charity made this possible for more than 31,000 people.

Eileen Mills, is one of the charity's nursing ambassadors, and explained why home support is so crucial.

She said: "I see at first hand what it means for patients to have the choice of where to spend their final days, surrounded by family and friends, which is why the appeal is so important.

"I am able to make my patient my one and only priority.

"It's wonderful to know I can offer them quality, personalised care without any interruptions."

Marie Curie supporter, Edwina Gudgeon said: "I wear my daffodil with pride every year, as a reminder of the wonderful support the Marie Curie nurses gave to my family.

"We relied on the support of their nurses to look after my younger sister at home before she died, and I will always be grateful for the care the whole family received."

Daffodil pins can be picked up from local stores, Marie Curie volunteer collectors, Marie Curie Shops and the via the charity's hyperlink www.mariecurie.org.uk/d affodil"website; or call 0845 601 3107.

To get help from the Marie Curie Nursing Service, talk to your GP, district nurse or discharge nurse.

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Telephone .....

Please return this form to:
Georgina Burke, Marie Curie Hospice, Bridgeman Road, Penarth, CF64 3YR

Hair business with unique twist

INSPIRATIONS, a business with a unique twist, was set up in Pencoed by Heather Drake, a well-established hair designer, with more than 22 years' experience in the industry.

For years, she has specialised in designing wigs and hair pieces for people with medical conditions that result in hair loss.

Her warm, friendly approach has been embraced within the community, and her enthusiasm shows through her work. Specialised items include lace enhancers (made on the premises) integrations and organic hair colouring.

Customer Andrea says: "I lost my hair recently to chemotherapy, something I found very traumatic. Initially, I bought a wig elsewhere, but was never impressed with it.

"As a result, I approached Heather and I immediately felt relaxed in her company. She patiently helped me to select a wig and cut it to style. Heather provides an all-round service in a private and discreet environment.

"I feel grateful to her for turning a potentially very traumatic experience into a positive one."

Contact Heather on 01656 859528, or call into the salon at 6a Pen-y-Bont Road, Pencoed, CF35 5RA.

COUNCILLOR JOHN CLIFFORD
As Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, it gives me great pleasure to support
Marie Curie Cancer Care Daffodil Campaign

Y CYNGHORYDD JOHN CLIFFORD
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BACK in the good old days before the banking crash, there was a popular saying that went '*I'm cash rich – but time poor***'.**

Well, it turned out that the property boom was all a big bubble and ordinary folk have watched the politicians and bankers play the blame game for several years now.

The only certainty is that there are not so many people claiming to be cash rich now!

However, there are even more of us now who are definitely 'time poor'.

It seems that many people are working longer hours – and then there are so many routine things that need attention when you do make it home.

Even when you find some free time, you may lack the expertise or the confidence to tackle these difficult tasks.

That is why so many of the local businesses that offer their goods and services in The GEM can really make a difference to anyone in the grip of 'time poverty'.

After all, there is a great deal to be said for devoting your own time to the things that you are good at – rather than increasing your stress levels by tackling something that has hidden pitfalls that you only discover through bitter experience.

(CONTINUED ON FACING PAGE).

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Volunteer group aims to befriend those in need

DINAS Powys Voluntary Concern (DPVC), a charity that provides help for local people, has embarked on a new 'befriending' project in association with The Big Lottery and with The Vale Centre for Voluntary Services.

Both men and women often find it difficult to readjust after losing, or becoming separated from, family or friends.

One of the aims of the project is to help reduce feelings of loss and isolation by developing a social network within the community.

Angela Campbell, who lives locally, has been appointed as the DPVC befriending coordinator and will be working with the existing team to develop and expand the support already offered by DPVC.

Her specific role will be to meet and support new and existing volunteers, to provide training for them as necessary, and to be a link between these volunteers, those they support, and the local community.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the DPVC befriending project, or if you live in the Dinas Powys area and you, or someone you know, would like more information, contact Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern on 029 2051 3700 or email: dpvc@btinternet.com.

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Resource service helps people maintain their independence in their home

REGAINING and maintaining your independence after a period of ill health, injury, or as a result of a long term chronic condition, can be difficult to manage.

As part of ongoing service improvements, the Vale Council and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board are working together to provide a new Vale Community Resource Service (VCRS).

How can the VCRS Team help?

They provide the right amount of rehabilitation and care, which is tailored to a person's unique needs, to give the best chance of achieving as much independence as possible.

This support can be provided at home from a wide range of health and social care professions, including dietetics, occupational therapy and physiotherapy, podiatry, speech and language therapy, with proven success rates for independence.

Referrals to the service are made by both health and social care staff and we will work with people who have the potential for rehabilitation and are motivated to work with our team of experienced staff.

This new service has not only resulted in improved benefits for Vale residents who use the service but ensures that the work of health and social care is more integrated, avoids duplication and makes the most of valuable resources and experience.

If you think you or someone you know could be helped by the Vale Community Resource Service, you can contact a member of the Health or Social Care staff who will be able to give you more information.

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www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Out and About with The GEM

WHAT' S ON AND WHERE

Antique night

THE Porthcawl San Sebastien Twinning Association will hold an antique night at the General Picton, New Road, Porthcawl, at 7pm on Friday, February 17. Tickets, £7 each including meal and free raffle.

Owls 4 U

OWLS 4 U will be appearing at Cosmeston at their Bat and Bird box event on Saturday, February 18, from 10.30am–1pm, and at Style Garden Centre, Wenvoe, on Sunday, February 19, 10.30am–4.30pm. Come and meet the owls!

Penarth concert

A CLASSICAL concert and film night will be held on February 18 at The Paget Rooms, Penarth at 8pm.

Ivan Ilic, a Serbian/French professional pianist is currently on tour promoting his latest CD of Chopin/Godowsky etudes arranged for the left hand!

He also stars in a short film which has been entered into the Cannes Film Festival and this will be shown during the evening.

Contact Naomi Roberts on www.cafeinternational.org.uk

Age Concern advice

AGE CONCERN Barry is holding a series of topics of interest on health at the Senior Health Shop, 38 Holton Road, Barry. Passmores of Barry will be available on Tuesday, February 21, 10am-12 noon, to give advice on will writing. Further information on 01446 732385.

Charity coffee

THE Vale Mayor will hold a charity coffee morning at the Corporate Suite, Civic Office, Holton Road, Barry, on February 21, 10.30am–12 noon. All proceeds will go to Arthritis Research UK.

Flower demo

ON February 22, Penarth Flower Arrangement Club will hold a demonstration evening at 7.30pm.

Rob Willis, from Risca, will give the demonstration at the Masonic Hall, Stanwell Road, Penarth.

Contact Ann Dobbins on 02920 703605 for details.

Gardening meeting

SULLY and District Gardening Society will be holding its first meeting of 2012 at The Old School, Sully, on Wednesday, February 22, starting at 7.30pm. The meeting will feature guest speaker Terry Walton – well known for his Radio 2, Radio Wales and TV appearances.

Admission will be free to society members, £3 to non members. Society membership will be available at the door.

Hockney trip

ON Thursday, February 23, Cowbridge Art Society has a day trip to the Royal Academy to see the David Hockney exhibition 'A Bigger Picture'.

The practical monoprinting session with Sue Edwards for that evening has, therefore, been postponed.

For further details of the society programme and activities, see www.cowbridgeartsociety.com

RNLI AGM

THE annual general meeting of the fundraising branch of the RNLI at Penarth Yacht Club on Wednesday, March 14, at 2.30pm, is open to the public and all are invited to attend.

Ladies bowls

LLANTWIT MAJOR ladies bowls club is holding its pre-season meeting on Monday, February 27, in the pavilion at 11am.

New members will be most welcome. Contact secretary Pat Cook on 01446 793815 for information or enquiries.

Eisteddfod fundraiser

A ST DAVID'S Day dinner will be held in aid of the National Eisteddfod on Thursday, March 1, at The Blue Anchor, Aberthaw, at 7.30pm.

For details, contact Jackie Lougher on 07701 064707 or merrytop@hotmail.com or Sharne Williams on 01446 751073.

Tax help for elderly

TAX Help for Older People will hold a free advice session on income tax at Old Hall, Cowbridge, on March 1.

To book an appointment or to access the helpline telephone 0845 3321 or 01308 488066.

Players' rehearsal

THE Dinas Powys Players have chosen *Good Things* by Liz Lochhead as their next presentation at the Parish Hall on April 19, 20, 21.

The three-act play is described as funny yet poignant and is a touching drama which follows the 'ups and downs' of love and life of the charity shop volunteers.

Rehearsals are well in hand, with an experienced cast under Hilary Morgan, who is directing for the group for the first time.

For tickets, telephone 02920 512868 or 02920 512945.

Summer school

DO you remember, or were you involved, in the summer arts school that took place in Barry during the 1960s–70s?

The Vale Council's arts development officer is working with the community to re-create a project about the Barry Summer Arts School.

The project involves a partnership between the National Eisteddfod of Wales and the Eisteddfod voluntary visual arts group and is supported by the Arts Council of Wales and the Vale Council.

The main event will take place during July and August and will feature an arts exhibition at Art Central gallery in Barry Town Hall, linked with the National Eisteddfod at Llandow.

Residents and visitors will be able to take part in a range of multi-arts workshops in Welsh and English, including a mixture of visual, performing arts and literature workshops.

The summer school, led by founders Lesley Moore, artist and vice-principal and Wyndham Heycock, co-director between 1962-1973 and pioneered new approaches to art and education.

For more information, contact Tracey Harding, arts development officer on 01446 709805, tcharding@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or Heledd Griffiths, Art Central gallery assistant on 01446 440428, hmgriffiths@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.

STAR ROBIN SKATES IN TO MEET HOSPICE CHILDREN

CHILDREN and staff at Ty Hafan welcomed Olympic skater Robin Cousins MBE to the hospice after his show, *Tropicana,* opened at the Motorpoint Arena last week.

The family hospice for young lives at Sully has been the Holiday on Ice nominated charity for the past 19 years and benefits from the gala night. During the performance, Frank Ady from Ty Hafan, was on hand to receive a cheque for £1,000.

The star visited Ty Hafan to meet some of the children and staff and commented: "This was a fantastic opportunity to visit Ty Hafan and to see how the money raised is used to directly benefit the families.

"It's good to know the money raised through *Holiday on Ice* is helping to give them real support and making a big difference to their lives."

For more information about Ty Hafan, visit www.tyhafan.org

Star Robin Cousins with a fan at the Ty Hafan hospice.

Ancient mariners swap sea tales at the town yacht club!

THREE of Barry's *ancient mariners shared their experience of over 180 years of sailing at Barry Yacht Club last week.*

More than 50 people attended the latest of the yacht club's winter talks, where three of the club's vice presidents and former Commodores, Brian Dotchon, Roger Donkin, and Michael Righton, shared their memories of the club's history – along with their own epic maritime tales of sailing in the Bristol Channel and further afield to the south coast, France and Scotland.

"It was wonderful to hear first-hand experiences of the yacht club's own history over the last 60 years, peppered with some humorous episodes of sailing exploits," said the Vice Commodore, Len Cattle.

Based at The Pier Head on Barry Island, Barry Yacht Club has some of the best sea sailing facilities in the Bristol Channel.

The club offers various types of membership including sailing, fishing, cadet, or social members.

Barry Yacht Club is a not-for-profit organisation and was established in 1928. It currently has more than 250 members from all parts of the Vale and Cardiff, attracting yachtsman from as far away as Bristol and Birmingham.

Further details about the club can be found at www.barryyachtclub.co.uk

Barry s ancient mariners from left to right: Brian Dotchon, Roger Donkin and Michael Righton.

PARK CLEAN-UP

FOLLOWING feedback by local residents, the Court First independent team will be holding a litter pick at Batt's Field, Barry, on Sunday, February 19, at 10am.

Local councillor Richard Bertin said: "I would like to say a big thank you to all those who recently completed their residents' survey in the ward. One of the issues that has come up is the need to have a clean up in Batt's Field."

"We are eager to get involved and help clean up this park, and local residents are welcome to join us!"

PACT meetings

DYFAN AND GIBBONSDOWN JOINT PACT surgery, 12 noon-2pm, February 20 at Colcot Community Centre, Keates Way, Barry.

CADOC PACT, 6pm on February 28 at Palmerston Community Learning Centre, Cadoc Crescent, Barry.

RHOOSE PACT, February 23 at Celtic Way Community Centre at 7pm.

TWYN-YR-ODYN coffee and chat, February 28 at the Horse and Jockey public house at 11am.

STANWELL PACT, March 2, Elfed Avenue United Church at 7pm.

PLYMOUTH PACT, March 7 in Lower Penarth Community Centre, Brockhill Way at 7pm.

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D709.

- **£2,000:** 293009.
- **The rollover, which now stands at £4,000, was not won this week.**
- **£10:** 767398, 251993, 809953, 626289, 571655, 847232, 260798, 534584, 415136, 838289, 771467, 396616, 119981, 615143, 908729, 146122, 961475, 232829, 252343,758871.
- **£5:** 567728, 415762, 180603, 632375, 970438, 800923, 885115, 208429, 752198, 837006, 539484, 772070, 473523, 563708, 481933, 554884, 300139, 502032, 129036, 289032, 228099, 721114, 805827, 529220, 443435, 912473, 861542, 589834, 606202, 346320, 405018, 340956, 719521, 826590, 248552, 468581, 375261, 287949, 495122, 621947, 282605, 139113, 744828, 764752, 483856, 573479, 667473, 120348, 690200, 499159, 343552, 205686, 334202, 170830, 409845, 912048, 433670, 341544, 227082, 246567.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please call telephone 02920 672062.

CONFIRMATION OF BYELAWS
PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS ACT1964
VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

NOTICE is hereby given that the Vale of Glamorgan Council intend, after expiry of the one calendar month from the publication date of this notice to apply to the Welsh Government for confirmation of Byelaws made by the Council under section 19 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

Copies of the Byelaws will be kept at the office of the Council at Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry CF63 4RU, and will be open to inspection without payment on any weekday during usual office hours for one calendar month from and after the date of publication of this notice. Copies of the Byelaws will also be supplied on receipt of an application accompanied by a fee of £2.00 for each copy.

Any objection to the confirmation of these Byelaws may be made by letter addressed to Alyson Tyler, Library Development Adviser, CYMAL, Welsh Government, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3UR within one calendar month from the publication date of this notice.

P.H. Evans, Director of Legal, Public Protection and Housing Services

Dated the 16th February, 2012

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P.H. Evans,
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National Nest Box Week

THIS Saturday, as part of National Nest Box Week, members will be making nest boxes at Miri Mieri.

Transition Llantwit has a limited number of kits available for £6, including nails. Call 01446 796849 or 07804 624795 – on a first come, first served basis!

There are also simple instructions for making a nest box on the British Trust for Ornithology's website www.bto.org/nnbw/index.htm.

"There are plenty of jobs to be done in the Miri Mieri garden, at Llantwit Major – so come along this (February 18) from 11am-1pm," a spokeswoman said.

Jubilee party

THERE will be a meeting in the Red Lion, Bonvilston, at 7.30pm on Wednesday, March 7, to discuss arrangements for a Diamond Jubilee party, which will be held on the weekend of June 2.

LEFT:
People who attend masterclasses over the coming months will have the chance of performing in front of the cameras, to give them a solid grounding in the craft of screen acting.

GEM READERS PROVE THEY HAVE TALENT – AS ACTING SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS FOR 2012 ARE ANNOUNCED

A WOMAN from Cowbridge and a teenager from Barry have won the fifth annual GEM/Ferris Entertainment Scholarships for 2012.

Bethan James (24) who works for a charity in Cardiff, and Ffion Phillips (13) who attends Stanwell Comprehensive School in Penarth, were the two individuals who impressed the judges and won.

They will be trained in screen acting for film and TV, and will appear in four films which will be shot over the masterclass weekends which are held in Penarth.

The prize was worth £380 for each scholarship winner.

Screen acting tutor Peter Ferris said: "The standard was incredibly high.

"It seems to get better each year. With our acting agency getting an average of 30 auditions and castings a day for national and international film and TV we are always on the look out for talented individuals of all ages, looks and characters."

There was a great response to the introductory masterclass with the ages ranging from 13 years old to 63 years old.

Peter explained: "One of our Belfast students and Eugene Hynes, joined three years ago at the age of 41, having been invalided out of the fire service and having never acted in his life.

"In January, he just finished filming his first major feature film 'The Good Man' with Irish actor Aiden Gillan.

"The choice was so difficult this year with so many characters and personalities to choose from including an amazing young 15-year-old, Jermaine King, who was so natural on camera and 42-year-old Robert McGrath with his shaved head, scar and Sheffield accent which makes him very interesting for the HBO Sky Atlantic Series 'Game of Thrones' which is filmed in Belfast and Malta.

"We get many of our actors auditioning for it through our Belfast office.

"In the end the winners were Bethan James from Cowbridge and Ffion Phillips from Barry.

"Both of them gave just that extra little something in the audition that makes them stick in your mind and I am so pleased to have them with us for the films and hopefully for future auditions.

"I really hope this is the catalyst to a successful career for both of them."

Peter added: "Everyone at Ferris Entertainment would like to thank The Glamorgan GEM for supporting the scholarship for the past five years.

"This year it was magic and packed with talented GEM readers."

Anyone interested in joining any of the Masterclass films please contact Ferris Entertainment either directly on 07801 493 133 or via email info@ferrisentertainment.com

ABOVE:
Peter Ferris with the GEM/Ferris Entertainment Scholarship winners 2012 Bethan James (left) and Ffion Phillips.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
Deddf Cynllunio (Adeiladau Rhestredig Ac Ardaloedd Cadwraeth 1990)

NOTICE is hereby given that application has been made to the Council for planning permission for the undermentioned developments:

HYSBYSIR trwy hyn i geisiadau gael eu gwneud i'r Cyngor am ganiatâd cynllunio ar gyfer y datblygiadau canlynol:

Listed Building Consent / Caniatâd Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00049/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Two storey rear extension plus demolition of toilet block annex
Location:/Lleoliad: 20, High Street, Cowbridge
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00092/LBC
Proposal:/Cynnig: Forming vehicle access through to rear garden with security gates and internal alterations
Location:/Lleoliad: Rear building, 79, Eastgate, Cowbridge
Listed Building:/
Adeilad Rhestredig Grade II

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE) ORDER 1995
GORCHYMYN CYNLLUNIO GWLAD A THREF (TREFN DATBLYGIAD CYFFREDINOL) 1995

Application(s) that may be of General Public Interest
Ceisiadau a allai fod o Ddiddordeb Cyffredinol i'r Cyhoedd

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00044/OUT
Proposal:/Cynnig: Outline planning for seven self contained flats
Location:/Lleoliad: Land at Barry Road, cornering Kenilworth Road, Barry

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00066/RES
Proposal:/Cynnig: Development of land for up to 100 dwellings, public open space and associated access
Location:/Lleoliad: Land at St. Johns Well, St. Athan

Application(s) which might affect a Public Right of Way
Ceisiadau a allai effeithio ar Hawl Tramwy Cyhoeddus

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00036/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Change of use of vacant barn to holiday let, bunkhouse and owners accommodation
Location:/Lleoliad: Garn Farm, St Hilary, Cowbridge

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00066/RES
Proposal:/Cynnig: Development of land for up to 100 dwellings, public open space and associated access
Location:/Lleoliad: Land at St. Johns Well, St. Athan

Departure from the Provision of the Development Plan
Ceisiadau nad ydynt yn cydymffurfio â Darpariaeth y Cynllun Datblygu

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00066/RES
Proposal:/Cynnig: Development of land for up to 100 dwellings, public open space and associated access
Location:/Lleoliad: Land at St. Johns Well, St. Athan

Application No:/
Rhif y cais: 2012/00083/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Two new buildings and a new 100 space car park on the Beechwood Residential College Campus, Hayes Road, Sully
Location:/Lleoliad: Beechwood House, Hayes Road, Sully

Full details (including plans) may be inspected during normal working hours for a period of 21 days in the offices of the Head of Planning and Transportation at the address given below, or via the Council's Online Applications Register at vog.planning-register.co.uk.
Mae'r holl fanylion (gan gynnwys y cynlluniau) i'w gweld yn swyddfeydd Pennaeth Cynllunio a Chludiant y cyngor (gwelwch y cyfeiriad ar waelod y dudalen) yn ystod oriau arferol swyddfa, am gyfnod o 21 o ddiwrnodau. Cewch eu gweld hefyd ar Gofrestr Ceisiadau Ar-lein y cyngor drwy fynd i vog.planning-register.co.uk.

Dated: 16 February, 2012
Rob Thomas
Head of Planning and Transportation
The Vale of Glamorgan Council,
Dock Office,
Barry Docks,
Barry.
CF63 4RT

Dyddiedig: 16 Chwefor, 2012
Rob Thomas
Pennaeth Cynllunio a Chludiant
Cyngor Bro Morgannwg,
Swyddfa'r Doc,
Dociau'r Barri,
Y Barri.
CF63 4RT

NEWS FROM THE FONMON APIARY

Icing sugar stop-gap as bees' supplies run low

FEBRUARY is certainly different to January: gone are the mild conditions and, the bees are reacting to it by staying at home.

The beekeeper must now be alert to the possibility that stores could be running low. Why is this?

Due to the previous month's kind weather, the bees were very active, indeed some pollen was observed coming in, and this could signify that the Queen has started to lay.

The active bees will have utilised the colony's winter stores to meet their needs and, any developing larvae will of course have to be catered for, creating yet more energy demands within the hive.

At present, there is not much outside for the bees to make use of.

This, then, is an anxious time for all us beekeepers, so I will leave the bees well alone as I am confident that they have stores to get by for now.

As a stopgap, I could resort to laying strips of read-made icing sugar (bought on a roll from the supermarket) on top of the frames and this would help the bees eke out any shortage that may occur.

Experienced beekeeper I may be, but I have caused the demise of two hives, one here at Fon-Mon, and one hive at the Dyffryn Apiary.

Both hives were on the standard solid floor, as used on a National hive; the entrance is quite big and must be protected with a metal mouse guard come winter, this I did not do opting to leave a wooden insert in place with a much reduced entrance hole.

Needless to say, mice chewed through the wooden insert and created mayhem within the hive. Result ruined wax and dead bees.

At Dyffryn, I actually observed the mice in the hive (five of them); there were bees still alive with a Queen,, so I transferred them into a nuc-box and moved them to another position in the apiary, once again opting for a wooden entrance block – how could I be so dull?

The mice took advantage of my kindness and this time finished the job they had started earlier.

Familiarity breeds contempt. So be aware, do things correctly. All the other hives have open-mesh floors on the devastated hives.

No excuses! At a time when we need all the bees we can get, I certainly have not helped.

HAROLD WILLIAMS

St Athan support from AM

Vale AM Jane Hutt met with Professor Garel Rhys, chair of the Economic Research and Advisory Panel, who was recently appointed to chair the St Athan Enterprise Zone Board, to discuss the benefits of the enterprise zone, which includes Cardiff Airport, to the Vale.

Ms Hutt AM said: "Giving St Athan Enterprise Zone status will raise real economic prospects for the Vale, Barry and Wales as a whole, providing incentives and levers to develop the civilian aerospace industry from the St Athan site."

Arbedion arbennig ar docynnau o bob math i'r Eisteddfod Eleni

GYDA llai na chwe mis i fynd cyn i'r Eisteddfod Genedlaethol ymweld ag ardal Bro Morgannwg am y tro cyntaf ers ymhell dros genhedlaeth, mae'r trefnwyr wedi cyhoeddi manylion nifer o ffyrdd cost-effeithiol i ymweld â'r Brifwyl yn ystod yr wythnos – hyd yn oed am un diwrnod yn unig.

Meddai Prif Weithredwr yr Eisteddfod, Elfed Roberts, "Rydym ni'n awyddus i sicrhau bod yr Eisteddfod mor hygyrch â phosibl ar gyfer pobl ar hyd a lled yr ardal, a rydym ni eisiau gweld nifer fawr o drigolion y Fro yn ymuno gyda ni yn Llandow o Awst 4-11. Mae'r gefnogaeth gan y gymuned leol wedi bod yn ardderchog dros y misoedd diwethaf a rydym yn gobeithio y bydd y brwdfrydedd yn parhau a thyfu wrth i ni gyhoeddi rhagor o fanylion am yr hyn fydd yn digwydd ymhen ychydig dan chwe mis.

"Mae tocynnau ar gyfer yr Eisteddfod yn mynd ar werth ar Mawrth 1, ac mae'r rhain yn cynnwys tocynnau cyngherddau a thocynnau Maes. Mae gennym ni nifer o gynigion ar gyfer pobl sy'n prynu ymlaen llaw er mwyn eich helpu chi i arbed arian.

"Gallwch arbed dros 10% drwy brynu'ch tocynnau Maes dyddiol cyn 1 Gorffennaf, a gellir gwneud hyn ar lein - www.eisteddfod.org.uk – neu drwy ffonio'r linell docynnau ar 0845 4090 800 o Mawrth 1. Os ydych chi'n awyddus i dreulio ychydig ddyddiau ar y Maes, beth am ein cynnig tridiau ar y Maes am bris deuddydd? Prynwch docynnau ar gyfer unrhyw ddau ddiwrnod ar y Maes a chewch docynnau am ddiwrnod arall o'ch dewis yn rhad ac am ddim. Mae arbedion gwirioneddol i'w cael drwy archebu ymlaen llaw.

"Mae manylion y cynigion arbennig i gyd i'w gweld ar ein gwefan, a byddwn hefyd yn dosbarthu gwybodaeth wrth i ni ymweld â gwahanol gymunedau ar hyd a lled y Fro dros y misoedd nesaf gyda Dilys y camper fan, felly edrychwn ymlaen i'ch gweld ym mhob cwr o Fro Morgannwg dros yr wythnosau nesaf."

Os hoffech chi i Dilys ddod i'ch cymuned chi, ebostiwch ni - gwyb@eisteddfod.org.uk – neu ffoniwch 0845 4090 300. Byddwn yn cyhoeddi manylion y daith dros yr wythnosau nesaf,a chofiwch ddod i'n gweld am gyfle i ennill tocynnau, nwyddau a mwy. Am ragor o fanylion am Dilys ewch i www.vangoch.co.uk.

Effective ways to enjoy the Eisteddfod

WITH less than six months to go before the National Eisteddfod visits the Vale of Glamorgan, organisers have announced details of a number of cost-effective ways you can attend the festival during the week – even if you're only attending for one day.

Chief Executive, Elfed Roberts says: "We strongly believe in making the Eisteddfod as accessible as we can for local people across the region, and we want to make sure that as many local Vale residents as possible have the chance to join us in Llandow from August 4-11.

"The support we've had from the local communities across the Vale has been marvellous and we are hoping that this support will continue to grow and develop over the next few months as we announce more details about this year's festival.

"Tickets for the events go on sale on March 1, and these include concert tickets and tickets to the Maes (field) itself. We've got a number of early bird offers this year, so why not order your tickets in advance to save some money?

"You can save over 10 per cent by purchasing your day tickets to the field before July 1. You can do this either online at www.eisteddfod.org.uk or by ringing our ticketline from March 1 onwards.

"We've also got a scheme for anyone wishing to spend a few days on the Maes – buy tickets for two days at the Eisteddfod and get a third day of your choice free of charge,

which is a great saving, especially if you want to bring the whole family to the festival.

"Details of all the special offers are available on our website, and we'll also be distributing information about all our offers when we'll be visiting different communities across the Vale before the end of the month, with Dilys the camper van, so we look forward to seeing you wherever you may live in the Vale over the next few weeks."

If you'd like Dilys to come to your community, get in touch either by emailing gwyb@eisteddfod.org.uk or by ringing 0845 4090 300. We'll be announcing the full programme over the next few weeks, and remember to come and see us for a chance to win tickets, merchandise and more. For more details about Dilys go to www.vangoch.co.uk.

SIONED EDWARDS

BARRY historian Tom Clemett is helping out the National Eisteddfod by donating photographs of the last time it visited the Vale in 1968. Tom's images will be placed on display when the Eisteddfod opens at Llandow in August.

BAY Resourcing

Supply Teaching Agency

Join a Winning Team

Bay Resourcing is a Cardiff based Multi Award Winning Teaching Agency. Due to increased demand, we have immediate day to day and long term opportunities in local schools for the following staff:

WELSH MEDIUM TEACHERS	PRIMARY/ SECONDARY TEACHERS	CATHOLIC TEACHERS	TEACHING/LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS	SPECIAL NEEDS TEACHERS
£80-£110 per day	£80-£110 per day	£80-£110 per day	£55per day	£80-£110 per day
£5 lunch allowance	£5 lunch allowance	£5 lunch allowance	£5 lunch allowance	£5 lunch allowance
40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance

To register you will need: Registration with the GTCW or have CACHE level 1-4 or a degree and have a minimum of 6 months experience with children in a classroom setting within the last 4 years.

To arrange a local interview, call: 029 2049 4560

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Start the music and light the lights… THE MUPPETS ARE BACK – RIGHT ON TOP FORM!

IF anyone has caught any episode of The Only Way Is Essex, they will be more than familiar with a group of muppets taking over the TV screen; but the real Muppets have been away for a very long time, their last big-screen outing, *Muppets From Space,* only slightly more entertaining than that gaggle from Essex.

Writer/actor Jason Segel's desire to see a new Muppet movie has finally borne fruit with the release of the originally titled *The Muppets*.

Segel plays Gary, whose brother Walter (a muppet himself, though not considered one) is a massive fan of the show.

Along with Amy Adams as Mary, Gary's girlfriend, the trio have to track down the Muppets to help them stop their theatre being bought and destroyed by oil tycoon Tex Richman (Chris Cooper); as you may imagine, hilarity (and Miss Piggy) ensues..

It seems surprising, given the current fondness for looking back on popular culture, that The Muppets weren't brought out of the mothballs sooner.

After all, their brightly coloured, zany antics would no doubt entice the audience who remembered them first time round, while beguiling a whole new, younger demographic – is it possible to be young and not fall in love with a green frog?

That it has taken this long no doubt has something to do with the fact that The Muppets didn't go away quietly, seemingly hanging on past the point of usefulness, yet writers Jason Segel and Nicholas Stoller, along with director James Bobin, have managed to restore the group back to how they should be, the film is an absolutely riotous and extremely pleasurable way to spend an hour or two.

This is a 'getting-the-band-back-together' film, the aim of Gary, Walter and Mary to put the group back to where they should be and fight off the megalomaniac intentions of the villainous Tex Richman, so it plays more to

SCREEN TALK

by GARETH JAMIESON

the the established crowd than any newcomers, but this is unabashedly a kid's film for adults.

With a U certificate, the film plays its humour cleanly and cleverly, and Segel and Stoller mine great comedic potential from the set-up, throwing in song and dance numbers, knowing nods to the audience with constant breaks of the fourth wall and, more importantly, letting The Muppets be The Muppets.

It is this last element that is so important, the characters not having to be shoehorned into pre-existing characters as they were in, say, *A Muppet's Christmas Carol*. They are instead allowed to be themselves and fun and inanity spring from it.

The script takes no great pains to be cynical or negative about the characters, even moments of conflict are easily resolved, and the lightweight tone suits perfectly.

Jason Segel and Amy Adams are both game for a laugh here, playing their best straight faces, albeit with a knowing wink here and there, and the raft of cameos from the likes of Jack Black, Rashida Jones and Alan Arkin bring a smile.

However, it's the incredible talented work of the humans behind the furry folks that will have you most impressed.

No doubt in this world of computer trickery it would have been easy to merely generate the characters on a hard drive, but the skill of the puppetry on show is truly wonderful to watch and gives the characters a reality that is hard to bypass.

With Flight of the Conchord's Bret Mackenzie delivering witty and impressive songs (any fans of the band won't feel shortchanged by the likes of 'Man Or Muppet'), fellow Conchord alumni James Bobin is mightily impressive in his debut big screen outing, the director broad yet wonderfully low-key, an anarchic energy flowing through that puts the cherry on top of the cake.

Bringing the characters back into the 21st century with a bang, The Muppets may very well be the kick start that could unleash a whole new era for the group; if that is the case more adventures in this vain wouldn't be amiss.

VERDICT – A veritable delight, *The Muppets* sees the gang back on fine form and not missing a beat. A hugely entertaining film that will leave you with a nice big dumb smile and relieve you of any cynicism (for two hours at least). It ticks all the boxes and makes for a really wonderful piece of work. Highly recommended.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: The Muppet Movie (1979), The Great Muppet Caper (1981).

Police opt for 5 percent council tax charge rise

by PHILIP IRWIN

THE South Wales Police Authority has decided to increase the policing element of council tax by five per cent.

This increase takes the amount paid for policing a Band D household to £169.42 for 2012-13.

While the council tax has increased, the overall police spending for next year has reduced by £8million to £249million for 2012-13, as a result of cuts from Central Government.

The chair of the Police Authority, Coun Russell Roberts, said: "Setting the budget is a difficult job every year. Even though this is the last time this authority will be setting this, it does not get any easier, particularly due to the financial situation.

"The sheer magnitude of the cuts which have been imposed upon us by central Government means that the dilemma facing us was an impossible one.

"In the current economic climate, any increase will be difficult to the public. However, we feel that this increase is the most appropriate decision, and the only option for us as a police service.

"The increase is equal to £8.07 per year for a Band D household – or just over 2p per day. Council tax figures are always indicated based on a Band D household.

"However, in reality 65 per cent of people in south Wales live in Band A–C properties, and so will be paying between £112.94 and £150.59 per year."

Coun Roberts continued: "80 per cent of our budget is spent on police officers and staff. It is impossible to find further savings without looking at reducing the number of people who work for us.

"We intend to reduce police numbers through natural retirement and through the use of police regulations for some officers with more than 30 years' service through the A19 process."

Coun Russell Roberts said: "It is very disappointing that once again, the Government has ignored its own findings and not given us the full amount of grant we need to police south Wales.

"If we received our full grant allocation, it would mean no police officer and staff cuts.

"We are responsible for policing Cardiff, our nation's capital city. Yet, this is not reflected in our funding.

"It cannot be right that Lothian and Borders and the Metropolitan Police Service receive additional funding for policing the capital cities of Edinburgh and London, yet we do not receive anything for the additional responsibilities of policing Cardiff."

This is the final budget to be agreed by South Wales Police Authority, before the introduction of a Police and Crime Commissioner in November 2012.

From next year, it will be the responsibility of the Commissioner to decide the council tax precept, and the spending of the police budget.

The election for the first Police and Crime Commissioner will take place across Wales and England on November 15.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
THOMPSON STREET (PART) AND BROAD STREET (PART) BARRY (PARKING CONTROL) (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2012

1. Notice is given that the Vale of Glamorgan Council in exercise of its powers under sections 81, 82, 83 and 84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended) and pursuant to Part III of Schedule 9 and of all other enabling powers proposes to make an Order, the general effect of which is as specified in the Schedule below.

2. Full details of the proposals including the proposed Order may be inspected at the address shown below during normal office hours and any objections you may have to this proposal must be submitted to the Head of Visible Services (Ref. IF672) in writing by 9th day of March 2012 and must contain the grounds upon which you object.

3. Persons objecting to the proposed Order are advised that in view of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 this Council is legally obliged to make any comments received in response to the proposed Order open to public inspection.

SCHEDULE

The following Traffic Regulation Orders to be amended as follows:

The Vale of Glamorgan Council (Barry Central Area) (Parking Control) (Consolidation and Amendment) Order 2009.

In schedule 4B, delete the text;
Limitation on waiting to 2 hours no return within 2 hours 8.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Saturday.

and insert;
Limitation on waiting to 2 hours no return within 2 hours 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday.

The County Council of South Glamorgan (Broad Street/Holton Road, Barry) (Prohibition of Waiting/Limited Waiting) Order 1992.

In paragraph 1(ii), delete and replace with;
Between the hours of 8am and 6pm on any other day than a Sunday for more than 2 hours in the lengths of road referred to in Schedule 2 to this Order if in respect of the length of road concerned a period of less that 2 hours has elapsed since the termination of the last period of waiting (If any) of the vehicle in that road.

In schedule 2 item (i), paragraphs (a) and (b) delete and replace with; (a) On its north side from a point 15 metres west of its junction with Buttrills Road for a distance of 12 metres west and from a point 74 metres west of its junction with Buttrills Road for a distance of 24 metres west.

(b) On its south side from a point 50 metres west of its junction with Buttrills Road for a distance of 12 metres west.

The County Council of South Glamorgan (Broad Street/Gladstone Road, Barry) (Prohibition of Waiting) Order 1977.

Delete paragraph 1(b) in its entirety.

Dated this 16th day of February 2012

M. Punter,
Head of Visible Services
Vale of Glamorgan Council,
The Alps, Wenvoe. CF5 6AA.

CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG 2012
GORCHYMYN RHEOLI PARCIO (DIWYGIEDIG) (RHANNAU O THOMPSON STREET A BROAD STREET Y BARRI)

1. Hysbysir trwy hyn y bydd Cyngor Bro Morgannwg, gan arfer ei bwerau o dan adrannau 81, 82, 83 ac 84 Deddf Rheoli Traffig 1984 (ddiwygiedig), ac yn unol â Rhan III o Atodlen 9, a phob p_er galluogi arall, yn gwneud Gorchymyn i'r diben cyffredinol a ddisgrifir yn yr Atodlen isod.

2. Cewch weld y cynigion llawn, gan gynnwys y Gorchymyn, yn y cyfeiriad isod yn ystod oriau arferol swyddfa. Dylech gyfeirio unrhyw wrthwynebiad sydd gennych i'r cynnig hwn i Bennaeth Gwasanaethau Gweladwy (Cyf.IF672) ar ffurf llythyr erbyn 9 Mawrth 2012, gan egluro'ch rhesymau dros ei wrthwynebu.

3. Os oes gennych wrthwynebiad i'r Gorchymyn, cofiwch fod gan y cyhoedd hawl o dan Ddeddf Llywodraeth Leol (Hawl i Wybodaeth) 1985 i weld unrhyw sylwadau sy'n cael eu gwneud, a bod dyletswydd gyfreithiol ar y cyngor i ddarparu ar gyfer hynny.

ATODLEN

Diwygier y Gorchmynion Rheoli Traffig canlynol:

Cyngor Bro Morgannwg (Atgyfnerthu a Diwygio Rheolau Parcio) (Ardal Canol y Barri) 2009.

Yn atodlen 4B, dileër y testun canlynol;
Hawl i aros am 2 awr yn unig 8.00am - 6.30pm (dydd Llun – dydd Sadwrn) ac ni chaniateir dychwelyd a pharcio o'r newydd o fewn y ddwy awr honno.

a dodi'r testun hwn yn ei le;
Hawl i aros am 2 awr yn unig 8.00am - 6.00pm (dydd Llun – dydd Sadwrn) ac ni chaniateir dychwelyd a pharcio o'r newydd o fewn y ddwy awr honno.

Gorchymyn Cyngor Sir De Morgannwg (Gwahardd Aros/Cyfyngu ar Aros) (Broad Street/Holton Road, Y Barri) 1992.

Ym mharagraff 1(ii), dileër y gwreiddiol a dodi'r testun canlynol yn ei le; Rhwng 8am a 6pm ar bob diwrnod ac eithrio dydd Sul, am fwy na 2 awr ar y darnau o heol a nodwyd yn Atodlen 2 y Gorchymyn hwn, os yw'n llai na 2 awr ers diwedd cyfnod parcio diwethaf y cerbyd yn yr heol dan sylw.

Yn atodlen 2 eitem (i), dileër paragraffau (a) a (b) a dodi'r testun canlynol yn eu lle;

(a) Ar ei hochr ogleddol o fan sy'n 15 milltir i'r gorllewin o'r gyffordd â Buttrills Road am 12 medr i'r gorllewin, ac o fan sy'n 74 medr i'r gorllewin o'r gyffordd â Buttrills Road am 24 medr i'r gorllewin.

(b) Ar ei hochr dde o fan sy'n 50 medr i'r gorllewin â'r gyffordd â Buttrills Road am 12 medr i'r gorllewin.

Gorchymyn Cyngor Sir De Morgannwg (Gwahardd Aros) (Broad Street/Gladstone Road, Y Barri) 1977.

Dileër paragraff 1(b) yn llwyr.

Dyddiedig 16 Chwefror 2012

M. Punter,
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Gweladwy
Cyngor Bro Morgannwg,
Canolfan yr Alpau, Gwenfô. CF5 6AA.

'Powerful display' commemorates Holocaust Day

THE 'Blue Line' exhibition continues at Art Central in Barry's King Square Town Hall with paintings and sculptures by Nicola Tucker and Maciej Hoffman.

Described as 'conflict and war' artists, Nicola is from Wales and Maciej from Poland.

They have brought the exhibition together as a result of their travels, experiences and knowledge, making a powerful exhibition to mark Holocaust Memorial in Barry.

An interested visitor was Vale AM Jane Hutt who said: "This is a powerful exhibition which depicts the theme of conflict and war so ever present in our troubled world.

"However, the memory of the Holocaust makes this work stronger than ever, with stark truths we must never forget."

The exhibition runs until February 25 at Art Central, Barry Town Hall and Library, King Square, Barry.

'Current CRB checks must be made' – claim members of local taxi drivers' association

by TIM CHAPMAN

THE case of a taxi driver who was licensed by a Vale Council committee without an up-to-date criminal record check, has caused concern among his colleagues.

They claim the move is unprecedented and throws official procedures into doubt.

But the chairman of the licensing committee has pointed out that the applicant had previously had a CRB check, that committee members had examined the facts, and were content that the taxi driver was "a fit and proper person".

Steve Thomas, chairman of the Vale of Glamorgan Taxi Association, told The GEM: "At the January licensing meeting, the committee went against the advice of the licensing officers and granted a taxi driver's badge to an applicant who did not meet the criteria of the conditions and did not even get a CRB check."

A Criminal Records Bureau check is designed to ensure that people in positions of trust are of good character. Typically, taxi drivers have a new check every three years.

The individual, who has not been named, was referred to as 'A' in council documentation and has had a previous CRB check.

It is understood council officers were concerned at information on his application relating to addresses. The committee decided, after issuing a warning, that he could drive without the requirement of an up-to-date check.

Mr Steve Thomas stated: "The vast majority of the local taxi trade are appalled that in this day and age a taxi badge has been granted to an applicant who cannot be thoroughly checked out.

"This has happened at a time when we're all asked to vigilant on security issues."

Fellow association member, Mike Moore of A2B Taxis, said that taxi drivers had voiced their concerns during a meeting with the committee.

"I asked councillors whether they would let their daughter or son, or another family member, in a taxi with a driver who had not had the proper checks and they would not answer me.

"Two things need to be done. The decision is wrong and should be overturned.

"Secondly, something should be put in place so this doesn't happen again.

"We thought we needed CRB checks by law, but if you listen to the committee chairman it is not an absolute legal requirement. All local taxi drivers have paid £44 for current CRB checks."

Mr Moore stressed that the uncertainty over what checks were required was bad for the reputation of the taxi industry.

However, Coun John Thomas, the chairman of licensing committee, emphasised: "The CRB disclosure is only one means that the licensing committee uses to satisfy themselves that the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a driver's licence

"In the case of this application, the committee took into consideration all the facts that were laid before them, including the fact that this applicant had previously held a Vale Council 'Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Drivers' Licence' and had previously been subjected to a CRB check by the council.

"After hearing all the facts, Members were satisfied that the applicant was a fit and proper person.

"The decision is a decision made on the facts of the application and is lawful."

Coun Thomas added: "The requirement for a CRB disclosure is the policy of the Vale Council for all applicants. If a driver is unable to obtain one, then it is the duty of the licensing committee to consider the application on its merits and it would not be lawful to refuse an application without considering all the facts."

Barry just pipped at post in (red and yellow) card game

BARRY RFC	11
ABERCWMBOI RFC	16

IT was a great pleasure to meet old friends from North Berwick before and after the fixture last Saturday.

The first game between Barry and the Scottish club was played way back in 1958, and many long-term friendships have been forged since then.

As for the Wales and Scotland match on Sunday, the consensus was that Wales would win, but not by too many points!

Conditions could not have been better, with firm ground underfoot and a clear blue sky. Neither Barry, nor fellow mid-tablers Abercwmboi, had played for a fortnight and the opening skirmishes exhibited the expected rustiness.

Playing uphill, Barry were in the lead after 10 minutes, courtesy of a long-range penalty by Lee.

Abercwmboi settled down to play some good rugby through their dangerous and speedy backs. They created enough pressure to force Barry onto the defensive and earned a penalty on the home 10-metre line. The kick was well stuck and just cleared the crossbar to square the scores.

Each side picked up a further penalty during another period of scrappy play. Unfortunately, each side also picked up a yellow card, following a large-scale melee on the half-way line.

Barry squandered a good chance for a try wide out on the left, running out of space when someone needed to have straightened the line.

Despite the efforts of hooker Evans, Hollister and Parker, the end of the first half saw the match evenly balanced at six points apiece.

The second session started very brightly for the home XV, with a very good try for Provis from broken play. His fellow backs worked hard to free him from 40 metres and he made no mistake on the run-in. Lee converted with ease.

Following this reverse, Abercwmboi roused themselves and began to put the home defence under continuous pressure.

While Barry ignored the obvious tactical choice of kicking downhill for position, they were always going to spend long periods defending deep in their own half.

The inevitable penalty arrived, allowing their opponents to cut the deficit with a further penalty. Around this point, a mass brawl ensued and each side had a player red carded.

A further yellow card for Barry meant that they were finding it more and more difficult to repel Abercwmboi attacks.

With only five minutes left, Barry looked to have edged the game but their opponents had other ideas! They scored a well-engineered try near enough to the posts to make the conversion a formality.

A bitter blow was made worse when, on the verge of full time Lee suffered what appeared to be a serious elbow injury.

Barry team: Hunt, Evans, Hollister, McTavish, King, Deguara, Parker, Jones, Lee, Ryan, Williams, Busitill, Provis, Evans, Adams. Subs: Bowditch, Jones, Williams, Poole.

Next Saturday, Barry are at home to Caerleon in the next round of the SWALEC Bowl; kick-off is at 2pm.

CO

Send us your match reports to: ***gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk.***

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Three bedrooms, semi detached traditional, living room with french doors, replacement kitchen/diner, integrated appliances, driveway leading to garage, enclosed rear garden, upvc DG heating.
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SOUTHBOURNE COURT, BARRY
Approx 20 years old, modern semi detached dorma bungalow, fitted kitchen, living room/dining room, two double bedrooms, upvc double glazed, gas central heating via a combination boiler, double driveway in width for ample parking, enclosed low maintenance garden.
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HOLLY COURT, BARRY
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HANNAH STREET, BARRY
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OAKFIELD ROAD, BARRY
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£189,950

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5:00PM 22 February 2012

Vale of Glamorgan Council · Hafod Housing Association · Newydd Housing Association · United Welsh · Wales and West Housing Association

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Newydd Housing Association
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Readvertised

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- Double-glazing
- Community alarm

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- Double-glazing
- Gardens

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H4U Reference 207165
Suitable for a family
- Three-bedroom house
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Gardens

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HANOVER COURT, BARRY

H4U Reference 1083961
Suitable for a single person over 60 (55 with medical issues) - no pets
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- First floor (no lift)
- Walk-in shower
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- Double glazing
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- Double-glazing
- Gardens

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H4U Reference 1082855
Suitable for a couple over 55 – no pets
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- Second floor
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- Communal gardens

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- Central heating
- Double glazing
- Scheme Manager & alarm

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OAK COURT, PENARTH

H4U Reference 1082877
Suitable for a single person over 60 (55 with medical issues) - no pets
- Studio flat
- First floor (with lift)
- Central heating
- Double glazing
- Scheme Manager & alarm

Rent £92.55 per week including service charges

PENDINE CLOSE, BARRY

H4U Reference 220002
Suitable for a small family
- Two-bedroom house
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Gardens

Rent £88.03 per week including water charges

QUEENS ROAD, PENARTH

H4U Reference 242892
Suitable for a single person or couple over 55
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- First floor
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Community alarm

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Fieldview Close	24	Gold	22/08/11
Harvey Street	28	Silver	05/07/10
Maes Yr Ysgol	98	Gold+	26/01/10
Tapscott House	47	Silver+	14/11/11
Thompson Street	45	Gold+	01/08/11
Laugharne Court	31	Gold	12/05/11
Merion Close	43	Silver+	22/06/11

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Family Notices

COOPER
Stanley Lewis

Suddenly on 11th February 2012, Stan of Llantwit Major. Dear loved husband of the late Lilian, loving father of Kenneth, June, Angela and the late Annette, father-in-law of Loraine.

A much loved grandfather of Ian and wife Rachel, Richard, Lisa, David, Lewis and Chloe and great grandfather of Joshua, Samuel and Connor and cousin of Barbara.

Resting at W.A. Brown & Son, College Street, Llantwit Major until the Funeral Service on Wednesday, 22nd February 2012 in Coychurch Crematorium at 2.15pm.

Family flowers only, but donations, if desired, to P.D.S.A. No black at Stan's request.

DAVIES
VIVIENNE

Gavin, Leighton, Michael and family would like to thank all friends, neighbours, customers of Tudor Garage and the village of Ystradowen for their many cards and words of comfort and support during Vivienne's illness.

Thanks must also go to her sisters, friends, carers and District Nurses who enabled Vivienne to spend her last days at home. A special thank you to Dr Terry Stuart who was always there for both Vivienne and myself, not only in a professional capacity but as a good friend.

My thanks to Thomas Brothers Funeral Directors and Minster Heather Weddell for a beautiful Service and for the donations received in respect of Cancer Research Wales and to the many who attended the Funeral to say their last goodbyes to Vivienne.

Words are not enough to thank you all.

Betty Williams

The Reverend Norman Williams and family wish to thank relatives and friends for their kindness and sympathy shown following the death of Betty, also for the many cards and messages that they have received and for the donations to the NSPCC.

Kathleen Malings

Peacefully on February 1, in hospital after a short illness, Kathleen, aged 91 years, of Rhoose. Beloved wife of the late Leslie John, she will be sadly missed by all her family. Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Thursday February 23, service 1.45pm at Porthkerry Church followed by private cremation. No flowers by request, donationsin lieu if desired to MacMillan Nurses c/o Mrs C James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, CF62 3DZ.

To see your Family Notice in The GEM, please contact us on 01446 774484 or via e-mail at gemsales@tindlenews.co.uk

MURRAY
Lynda

Suddenly in the early morning of 13th February, Lynda of 2 Edmund Place, Barry. Passed away. Tony Davies her beloved partner will miss her greatly.

Funeral arrangements to be arranged.

HOWE
Stephen William

Suddenly on 9th February at his home in St Athan, Howie beloved husband of Dawn, brother-in-law of Billy, uncle of Tracey and Dean.

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18-year-old golf star urges young to perform above par

WALES' young golfing sensation, Rhys Pugh, is helping to find the stars of the future by backing a new training scheme offered by the Vale Resort to encourage more young people to try the sport.

The Pontypridd 18-year-old, who was recently crowned the 'BBC Cymru Wales Carwyn James Junior Sportsman of the Year' after becoming the youngest ever person to win the Amateur Order of Merit at the Welsh Men's Amateur Championship, started off his glittering career at the Vale Resort's junior coaching programme in 2002.

Since then, he has gone on to win three out of three matches for Great Britain and Ireland at the 2011 Walker Cup, the amateur equivalent of the Ryder Cup, and was awarded Wales' joint 'Top Amateur Golfer of 2011' by the Golfing Union of Wales, along with Amy Boulden.

He holds the record as the youngest player to represent Wales, an honour he achieved as a 15-year-old in the 2009 Home Internationals.

Rhys, who is studying in East Tennessee University, USA, competes on the challenging US collegiate golf tour.

He said: "I've been a member of the golf club at the Vale Resort since I was eight years old, and the teaching and encouragement I received from instructors there all those years ago has been invaluable grounding for my career so far.

"I hope that the Vale's new scheme will harness this renewed interest young people are showing for golf, and encourage more young people to follow in my footsteps by picking up a club and getting out on to the green."

The new junior golfing package at the Vale Resort at Hensol is aimed at enabling more young people to take up the sport.

Open to young people aged between eight and 18 years old, it includes free access to the Vale's Academy Coaching Scheme, a copy of the academy's coaching manual and more than 50 per cent off the junior membership subscription for the first year.

Clive Coombs, golf manager at the Vale Resort, said: "Rhys is just one of our members who has achieved great things by using the facilities and coaching here at Vale Resort, and we're extremely grateful that he's helping us encourage the next generation to get excited about golf."

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Peugeot Bipper Tepee mixes business with real pleasure!

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DON'T mix business with pleasure...That old adage has stood many a businessman and woman in good stead, including my successful old boss at Hampshire the county magazine, who has since sadly passed away.

Paul Cave, who was also legendary crooner Frankie Vaughan's manager, used to frequently advise colleagues on the subject. He was well placed to, being married to Joan for over 60 years.

But even he conceded that there can be occasions where these two pursuits sit as comfortable bedfellows, such as when brokering deals on the golf course, as he frequently did.

In much the same way, the van-like Peugeot Bipper Tepee represents an interesting opportunity for savvy small traders or taxi drivers with families. Monday to Friday, it provides versatile transport for lugging loads, with ample room for deliveries and ease of access thanks to sliding rear doors, which could also be helpful for disabled passengers.

My wife finds these doors very easy and lightweight to open when compared to standard car doors. Come the weekend this unusually named vehicle (I have researched this name and it appears that 'Bipper' is completely made up while 'Tepee' is a form of tent) doubles up as highly capable family transport with a good amount of room inside.

What a great option for the small business wanting to keep a tight rein on the budget: invest in one vehicle rather than two.

On taking delivery of a bright red example, Postman Pat instantly sprang to mind, while work colleagues asked whether, now that I was driving a Fire Service vehicle, I had a blue light to stick on the roof. These comments aside, the Pug offers very well priced (sub-£14,000), comfortable and economical transport.

It is noticeably quite high off the ground, giving the driver a good view of the road ahead. Inside, all controls are within easy reach and while there is no central armrest the driver's seat incorporates a useful folding one.

The Peugeot Bipper Tepee.

Driver comfort is paramount and Peugeot is particularly strong in this area. There's even a footrest, which is quite something considering that the much dearer Volvo S60 doesn't have one. The steering wheel is helpfully moulded ensuring that the hands sit in the all-important 10 and two o'clock positions.

There's a reasonable five-speed box, which can be a little indecisive particularly when changing down from fifth to fourth.

Plenty of headroom will please those over six-foot while the dash provides much storage space. There are no carpets, instead the floors are covered in a low maintenance, hardwearing anti-slip black plastic. There are also electric front windows.

When negotiating a roundabout, the driver's right leg, which is at the same height as the door handle, can sometimes push it, resulting in all the doors locking.

Arguably the tailgate would be more user-friendly if it was split fold – in its current form it is cumbersome when opening.

The Bipper Tepee has to compete against others including the almost identical Citroen Berlingo and the slightly peculiar Skoda Roomster. Where the latter looks as if Skoda didn't bother consulting a designer at least it seems that one has cast their eyes over the Peugeot. While its appearance is still perhaps an acquired taste, once you're behind the wheel you don't really care what it looks like anyway.

Parkers, the car experts, write: "The Bipper Tepee is a small yet practical runabout that's based on the Bipper van – something that's evident in its boxy looks and rather sparse cabin. It may not look very dynamic, but the square shape means plenty of interior space and a large boot. The rear bench seat can fold down, plus it's removable, allowing you to boost the carrying ability to van-like proportions. On the road it's easy to drive and happy at motorway speeds, while the compact size makes it a doddle to squeeze into small parking spots."

You can't really fault this very well priced vehicle.

It's efficient, offers bags of space and is pretty nippy too.

Peugeot Bipper Tepee Outdoor with engine stop/start £13,245.
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GEM sport

SECOND HALF REVIVAL PUTS TEAM IN THE DRIVING SEAT

Battling Scots regain pride as Wales pursue title dream

BACK PAGE COMMENT by Don John

WHAT a difference a year makes… Struggling Wales made the long journey north to Edinburgh almost exactly 12 months ago, on an eight-game losing streak, with head coach Warren Gatland's position under growing threat, amid mutterings fanned by the media.

Scotland had been firm pre-match favourites, but in the event, Wales shrugged off a bleak 10 months of failure to stun Murrayfield with a comfortable 24-6 victory – their eighth in 10 recent encounters between the two – sealed by Shane Williams' record-breaking 53rd try.

In fact, since going down 9-3 in the first clash between the two nations on January 8, 1883 (when the Home Championship debutants arrived in the Scottish capital one man short and had to borrow a Scotland replacement, a Dr A Griffin of Edinburgh University!) Wales went on to win 65 of the 116 matches, losing 48, with three games drawn.

On Sunday, the Welsh camp were confident of extending this winning record at the Millennium Stadium, on the back of their acclaimed World Cup displays Down Under in the autumn, and the impressive 23-21 victory over Ireland in Dublin the previous Sunday.

In contrast, Scotland's disappointing World Cup form had continued with a 6-13 Six Nations home defeat to England in an error-ridden Calcutta Cup clash at Murrayfield the same weekend.

However, before the Welsh team ran out in front of a hugely-expectant crowd of 73,189 on Sunday afternoon, assistant coach Robert Howley clearly feared a backlash from that match: "Scotland really should have beaten England and they will be disappointed. We must be ready for them on Sunday.

"The Six Nations is a magical championship and the one thing we know is that if you don't front up, you can get beaten."

His blunt message was echoed by Gatland, who cautioned his team not to underestimate the Scots who, after all, had come perilously near to causing a shock Six Nations upset, before going down 31-24 in an absorbing, drama-filled thriller at Cardiff two years ago.

The pragmatic Kiwi warned: "We cannot afford to underestimate Scotland. With the amount of possession and territory they had against England, they should have won the game and they will come to the Millennium Stadium buoyed by that knowledge and determined to answer the critics with a win against Wales."

For much of the first half, it seemed the warnings had fallen on deaf ears; for despite a bright, initial opening – when the powerful Welsh backline threatened to sweep the desperate defence aside – Scotland held firm and, in fact, struck the first blow with a successful penalty kick, before proceeding to more than hold their own in both the tight and loose exchanges.

Whether the second row disruption and late withdrawal of the skipper (their only genuine openside, Sam Warburton) through injury, was a decisive factor, or simply that the pre-match hype following the Dublin victory had fostered a casual complacency, or over-confidence, in this still-developing young Welsh squad, is hard to say.

It did seem, though, that despite the coaches' repeated warnings, they did not appear to have taken the Scottish challenge seriously enough, failing to capitalise on early territorial gains and turn pressure into points, apart from a solitary penalty by full back Leigh Halfpenny.

Worryingly, in the absence of Warburton, there were problems at the breakdown and again in the line-out (though thankfully, the ever-reliable Adam Jones was his usual rocklike self in stabilising the setpiece).

Whatever the reason for Welsh hiccups, the lively, though limited Scottish attack, though still glaringly error-prone, was inspired to greater efforts, coming more and more into the game and laying siege to the Welsh line.

In the end, scrum half Mike Phillips was only too glad to lob the ball out of play to end a problematic first half in which Wales were fortunate to go into the interval on level terms at 3-3.

One can only imagine what Gatland and his crusty No 2, Shaun Edwards, had to say in the dressing room, but whatever it was did the trick, for Wales came back on to the field a side transformed – Blues' wing Alex Cuthbert powering through for a try converted by Halfpenny soon after the resumption.

When centre Jonathan Davies was brought down without the ball while in full flow two minutes later, bringing the first of two yellow cards for Scotland, suddenly Wales were in the driving seat.

Even a second penalty by the impressive Scottish outside half Greig Laidlaw did not interrupt the Welsh flow, for Halfpenny scampered over for the first of his two tries which he converted himself.

When Halfpenny added his second try (which he again converted) Wales were in a seemingly insurmountable position at 27-6, with 25 minutes to go, and with 'Bread of Heaven' and 'Hymns & Arias' resounding around the ground, the jubilant home fans waited for the floodgates to open.

It didn't happen – and the credit for this must go to a courageous and determined effort by do-or-die Scots, who simply refused to throw in the towel and, in fact, were controversially denied a touchdown by referee Roman Poite of France.

However, they were not to be denied for long and fittingly it was Laidlaw who plunged through a melee of players for a try which he converted himself.

Halfpenny then had a chance to have the final say, but for once failed with a penalty attempt – and another thoroughly enjoyable and entertaining clash between these two old rivals ended with a final score-line of 27-13.

For Scotland, despite their two defeats, there is much to build on, for at least their pride has been restored somewhat by a much-improved display, after the bitter disappointment of their poor performance against England.

For Wales, the championship dream goes on, with first a Triple Crown beckoning at Twickenham on February 25, followed by two more home games – against Italy and France, whose match with Ireland was iced off on Saturday – leaving the prospect of a title showdown with Wales hanging tantalisingly in the air.

*Pictures courtesy of the **Huw Evans Agency.***

***ABOVE:** Wales' other giant wing, Alex Cuthbert, swats Scottish defenders aside and powers through for his side's opening try after the interval, to launch his team's second half revival.*

***LEFT:** Leigh Halfpenny shone for Wales with two smartly-taken tries, and he was also on form with his place kicking – for a match total of 22 points*

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